A Foot in Both Worlds:

The Bicultural Audience and Film

in New Zealand

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Abstract

This Masters thesis works as a pilot project to provide a platform for the development of bicultural audience reception research in a New Zealand context. For the purpose of this study, a "bicultural" person is defined as someone who is born in NZ to either one or both parents who have immigrated from a non-Western, non-European country. These criteria mean that those in the bicultural audience have a binary of cultural knowledge, space and etiquette that is distinct and at times contradictory. Bicultural people develop skills to navigate and negotiate both spaces, applying knowledge accordingly and developing the ability to adapt to their cultural environment and expectations as required. I provide a platform that concentrates on an audience that is rarely represented onscreen, but who applies a complex and sophisticated viewing process in order to achieve cinematic pleasure through the consumption of mainstream films. I begin with a survey of psychological studies that provide research on the structure, influences and effects of embodying a bicultural identity. This survey provides a foundational understanding of biculturalism, while critiquing the methodological approach to an identity that thus far, has yet to be recognized in the field of audience reception. I then refer to my own qualitative research in the form of focus groups and compare my findings with the work of bell hooks (1990,1992), in creating a rudimentary but insightful understanding of bicultural viewing processes.

Keywords: bicultural, NZ, bicultural audience, bicultural spectatorship, bicultural representation, film, cinema.

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Introduction

This thesis details the early stages of acknowledging bicultural cinematic audience reception in New Zealand, through an ethnographic/auto ethnographic methodological framework. The auto ethnographic approach stems from my own experiences as a bicultural person raised in NZ to one NZ European parent, and one Samoan parent. In academia as well as in film, there is a lack of engagement with biculturalism in a NZ context, where the binary of mainstream (NZ) and the subject's secondary culture can be recognized, represented, and critically evaluated together. As the number of bicultural people born in NZ continues to grow, it is important that academic research keeps up with these demographic changes. Audience reception scholarship also needs to remain open to new approaches and developments, in order to provide a space for new perspectives to be articulated. As a bicultural person with similar lived experiences to those who took part in the focus group sessions, my auto ethnographic approach frames these responses, and informs connections made to the audience reception studies conducted by bell hooks (1990, 1992). Thus, a bicultural lens informs this entire body of research, making it a unique contribution to audience reception scholarship, both in NZ and within the discipline of film studies. This thesis is a pilot study that future research can build upon and develop as a subcategory, one that accounts for those subjects whom neither conform to the established classifications of identity, nor neatly fit into a conventional audience.

The method utilised in this pilot research took the forms of two focus groups of high school students from two different High Schools in Dunedin. The term "bicultural" is defined in this pilot thesis as a person who is born in NZ, to either one or both parents who have immigrated to NZ from a non-Western, non-European country, previous to their birth[1]. It is important to highlight that those defined as bicultural have a parent/s

[1] It is important to recognize that

> "The Māori renaissance of the 1970s and 1980s brought about important changes in the way New Zealand saw itself, and the way the public sector delivered services to New Zealanders. The public sector began to talk about bicultural New Zealand, and describe the Treaty of Waitangi as the country's founding document. Government departments began to adopt the idea that the languages, cultures and traditions of both Pākehā and Māori should be officially recognized by the state." (Hayward 2012).

While I acknowledge that New Zealand as a nation state applies the term "bicultural" in reference to the binary of Māori and non- Māori, I provide an alternative definition of the term in this thesis, as articulated in the definition provided in Chapter One. I use this definition because the binary of cultural knowledge, space and etiquette experienced by the bicultural audience creates a unique viewership through which the dichotomy is realised; a dichotomy that is seldom acknowledged in audience reception.

who have immigrated from non-Western countries. This creates a binary between the NZ culture and the secondary culture that is not directly influenced by Western ideologies, resulting in a binary of cultural knowledge, space and etiquette is more pronounced, and at times more contradictory than complementary. Further, having one identity informed by two cultures that are so distinct from each other means that the bicultural person will encounter unique hurdles (as well as benefits) from being part of—but not wholly belonging to—two cultures.

This study has borrowed from several fields of research: psychology, sociology, transnational studies, nationwide census statistics, as well as film audience reception and spectatorship theory. Multiple disciplinary influences allow this research to first establish a definition of a "bicultural" person within a NZ context, and to navigate the previously unchartered structures of the cultural binary (which includes cultural knowledge, etiquette and space) that make up this unique identity. It is here that I begin a narrative that revolves around the structure of the bicultural identity, engagement and accessibility each participant has to their two cultures, and the way this informs cinematic spectatorship. The goal of this thesis is not to create a bicultural audience reception theory in the coming chapters, but to bring to the forefront these very important and insightful engagements and processes that the bicultural audience utilise in their pursuit of cinematic pleasure. Part of providing a platform for bicultural audience reception research comes from aligning this research with scholarship that shares similarities, however minute, in cinematic engagement.

The structure of this thesis is straightforward, moving from the bicultural identity and its many compositions and influences, to intertwining audience reception and representation theory with the responses provided by participants. I use the established concepts of representation and cinematic engagement (such as Stuart Hall's Encoding/Decoding theory[2] (2012)) as tools to deconstruct the multi-layered meaning

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[2] Hall's theory of encoding/decoding provides an alternative understanding to the traditional sender/message/receiver perception of audience's engagement with media texts, "…the moments of "encoding" and "decoding", though only "relatively autonomous" in relations to the communicative process as a whole, are *determinate* moments." (137). Essentially, texts (or in this case films) are encoded with a message created by the film maker. The text is then consumed by the audience, who decode the film, taking from it a reading that is either dominant, negotiated or oppositional. The dominant reading means the audience gains "… "preferred meanings" [of] the rank order of power and interest and the structure of legitimations, limits and sanctions" (141). The negotiated reading "…accords the privileged position to the dominant definitions of events while reserving the right to make a more negotiated application to "local conditions"" (143). Finally, an oppositional reading is when the audience, who normally decodes a text in a negotiated way, begins to decode in subversive way (144).

making process utilised by the bicultural audience, finishing in chapter three by associating relevant participant responses with qualitative research conducted by bell hooks (1990, 1992). In moving through psychological and sociological research that theorizes the development of bicultural identity development, I provide a stepping stone towards understanding the thought processes that accompany the multifaceted experience of growing up not quite belonging to either culture. W.E.B. DuBois refers to a "double consciousness" (2008), which mostly readily articulates the development of skills such as frame switching (Benet-Martinez et al 2002 493). Both of these perspectives are the result of moving and negotiating between two cultural knowledges, spaces and etiquettes. This double consciousness therefore informs the viewing process, which is discussed further with examples from participants in chapter three. Through developing the major themes of identity, representation and spectatorship, I illustrate how all three inform each other, in a myriad of ways.

Through research and analysis of participant responses, it became clear that the work of bell hooks (specifically her work on black female spectatorship) provided a source of comparison and in some ways, similarity in engagement with mainstream cinema[3]. In new research around a very recently recognized group within NZ, it is important to validate and legitimize these cinematic viewing processes. Comprehending these viewing processes is difficult, especially as the responses that resulted from the focus groups did need unpacking. However, through this breakdown of the meaning-making process, it becomes clear near the end of chapter two and throughout chapter three, that hooks' work with black female interviewees correlates somewhat with the work I have done in my focus groups.

The way bicultural participants discussed specific aspects of narratives, characters and character relationships, which they then reworked to find a feature that they saw as representative of their experiences, illustrates many interesting insights. First, something I overlooked in my preparation for the focus groups: participants did

[3] As noted by an external examiner, aligning the viewing experiences and processes of the bicultural audience I discuss in this thesis with that of the experiences of Māori would, at first glance, be a likely comparison. However, due to the nature in which this bicultural audience negotiate both the binary of space and cultural identity, I align these experiences and viewing processes with that of the African American audience. This is precisely because, like the bicultural audience, the African American audience is not eligible to geographical space or cultural recognition that way that first nation peoples *should* be. The way I align the two groups (African American and the bicultural audience) is through their status as minority groups. Associating the bicultural viewing process with that of Māori could be seen as diluting the colonial struggles encountered Māori, as well as the history that informs the NZ national identity. While the Māori and bicultural experience share many similarities, it is with the utmost respect that two are not affiliated in this thesis. This is discussed further in Chapter One.

not generally think of themselves as bicultural. This could be related to their individual relationships with their mainstream (NZ) and secondary culture, or that their identities had yet to be recognized as "bicultural". However, what is more likely the case, is that these participants are still young people, who have not had the chance to reflect on their identity structure because they are still developing their personalities.

Secondly, due to the lack of representation of these minorities in mainstream cinema, a portion of participants attuned their likeness, or the feeling of marginalisation, to other minority groups that are represented in mainstream (or alternative) cinema. Some examples include: Anna, a year 9 girl of Samoan descent, feeling a sense of comradery towards the female main characters in *Hidden Figures* (Dir. Theodore Melfi 2016); Emily, a year 11 girl of Tongan descent, preferring Korean cinema to mainstream films; and Catherine, a year 12 girl of Filipino descent, and Danica, a year 11 girl of Lebanese descent, who enjoyed Studio Ghibli films because they featured young female leads. Alternatively, Fiona, a year 12 girl of Peruvian descent, discussed how family viewing of Latin American films had become a frequent pastime that her mother encouraged, as a way of engaging language skills[4] and cultural storytelling.

One more development during focus group discussion, was how Emily and Greta, a year 12 of Cook Island descent, were able to connect to the film *Moana* (Dir. Ron Clements and Jon Musker 2016). Emily was able to extract the nature of the relationship between Moana (Auli'i Cravalho) and Maui (Dwayne Johnson), and relate it to her own familial relationships, providing a sense of legitimacy about what her family and culture prioritise and value. Seeing Moana and Maui work together without the traditional romantic elements, saw Emily feeling a sense of validation about her own relationships at home and in her community.

Meanwhile, Greta unpacked the narrative of Moana to create a reimagining of her parents' transnational experiences and struggles with immigrating to NZ from the Cook Islands. This provided a different kind of validation for Greta, in the sense that the medium of film provided a visualisation of a transnational experience that she, herself, did not go through. However, it was this experience that effectively shaped Greta's life, her opportunities, and her bicultural identity. Further, the film provided her with more understanding of the motivations behind such life-altering decisions. These different

[4] Fiona's family speak Spanish in the family home (transcript 11)

readings and features that surfaced illustrate the variety of experiences and exposure those in the bicultural audience share as a collective, as well as develop on their own. There is no one cultural binary or succinct identity structure that is exactly the same in two bicultural people. The goal of this research is to avoid generalisations and stereotypes among the minority groups that make up the NZ bicultural audience. Instead, I aim to highlight the positive aspects of embodying and, arguably, belonging to two cultures; it is the binary that is of importance and what needs recognition, not the cultures that make up that binary.

My research is a snapshot of how young bicultural people relate to, engage with, and create meaning out of films of their choice, in contemporary NZ. Like all pilot projects, there is room to improve methodological details and, given adequate resources, recruit a larger pool of participants that would allow for a wider scope, and a more even gender representation. However, this research achieved its goal in gaining nine different cultural binaries, who represent the Philippines, Western Samoa, Tokelau, Tonga, Fiji, Peru, Lebanon, Israel and the Cook Islands. While at times participants were limited in their discussion, I believe the variety across the two focus groups effectively captures the multicultural status of NZ. This thesis is concerned with celebrating differences in identity structures, varying degrees of engagement with both cultures, and levels of comprehension of said binary – all of which inform this unique viewing process that is bicultural spectatorship.

Chapter 1
Literature Review

1.1 Introduction

This Masters thesis provides an overview of the development of a bicultural audience reception theory, with reference to several disciplines and qualitative research in the form of two focus groups. Using an ethnographic/auto-ethnographic approach, I incorporate NZ population statistics (2005, 2013) (Smillie 2002), psychological studies that provide insight into bicultural identity development, and audience reception theory that centres around cinematic minority representation and minority spectatorship. Beginning with the concept of bicultural identity, I lay a concise foundation of definitions relating to cultural identity, space, knowledge and etiquette that are informed by Transnational Studies, specifically methodological transnationalism. These terms provide a comprehensive understanding of who the bicultural audience is within a NZ context, and alludes to the familial background that shapes the cultural divide and overlap that a bicultural person encounters (in relation to their cultural binary). Acknowledging these different dimensions contributes to the overall framework of defining who the bicultural audience is, what influences their viewership and the viewing processes they utilise when watching cinema.

Moving from the psychological aspect of the study, I acknowledge the diverse nature of the minority groups represented in the groups, as well as throughout NZ using statistics provided by StatisticsNZ (2005, 2013) (Smillie 2002). I recognize the assumptions and limitations of the qualitative research methodology in more depth, discussing research obstacles and outcomes. I complete chapter two with discussion and a critique of several themes that developed over the two focus groups in relation to familial viewing habits and the minority representation that participants felt they most related to. In the third chapter of the thesis, I look at the spectatorship of minority audiences, paying specific attention to African American spectatorship of mainstream cinema (hooks 1990,1992), applying DuBois' concept of "double consciousness" (117) to this process of bicultural viewership.

Since there is no research in the field of audience reception on the NZ bicultural audience (as I define it) that I have encountered, I refer to audience reception research that most closely correlates the bicultural audience experience of Otherness. As

discussed in the definitions section of this literature review, I stress that it is important to position this pilot project of bicultural audience reception next to, and not within, already established discussions relating to African American cinematic representation and spectatorship. Centrally, African American audiences share a similar feeling of dislocation and isolation in their engagement with mainstream cinema. I make comparisons between the bicultural audience and the African American audience in regard to their viewing practices, the bicultural audience's engagement with black representation, as well as the representation of minorities in cinema using data I gained from the focus groups.

Bicultural audience reception theory cannot be developed in a vacuum; it must be informed by previous research of minority viewing processes in order to provide further, nuanced description and discussion of cinematic spectatorship. Placing bicultural audience reception next to minority spectatorship that engages mainstream cinema (and media) allows for this pilot project to be informed by past research and its engagement of other audiences who are underrepresented, or who rarely feature onscreen. The process of finding a connection or common ground between the bicultural self and the mainstream character/narrative, as well as uncovering the preferences and specificity of those onscreen connections, forms my thesis, and will be the main focus of the final chapter.

1.2 Methodology

An ethnographic/auto ethnographic approach[5] is applied to this research thesis to investigate the cinematic viewing practices of the NZ bicultural audience. I carried out qualitative research in the form of two focus groups, one all-female, one mixed group, at two High Schools – one all-female school, one co-educational– in Dunedin, Otago, over three weeks. Ethical approvals were granted by the University of Otago Ethics

[5] Caulkins defines Ethnography as "…a means of illuminating lived experience where social and cultural contexts are poorly understood…Ethnography is a contextual method that seeks holistic understandings of persons in social settings." (2014)

Committee and the Ngāi Tahu Research Consultation Committee[6]. In conjunction with this methodology, an analysis of statistics of NZ population minority growth was undertaken; specifically children born in NZ to an immigrant parent/s (StatsNZ 2005, 2013) (Smillie 2002). Psychological studies exploring the structure and effects of bicultural identity development, for example, Phinney (1996), LaFromboise, Coleman and Gerton (1993), Benet-Martinez et al (2002, 2005), and Mok and Morris (2012), serve as contributers in the analysis of the focus group findings. A key concept of transnational studies is implemented in the discussion of familial dynamics and influences of the bicultural audience. Specifically, methodological transnationalism which "...reformulates existing data and accounts, invents new kinds of information and evidence, applies existing investigative approaches in novel ways, and designs novel research tools and approaches with which to analyse, explain, and interpret transnational phenomena and dynamics." (Khagram and Levitt 6). Methodological transnationalism frames the responses from both the all-female and mixed group, which are then analysed through the lens of audience reception and cinematic representation theory.

Utilising transnational studies as a backdrop, we can develop an understanding of the diverse and culturally complex backgrounds of these participants that contribute to the analysis of their responses. Going forward, it is important to note that "[t]ransnationalism conceptualises a new form of migration and practices. It contests previous understandings of migration which involve permanent settlement and ultimate assimilation. Instead, it suggests that contemporary immigrants resist assimilation; they engage often in border-crossing, and their practices are fluid" (Angel Chan 2). This resistance to assimilation is productive as evident in this thesis. Resistance to assimilation creates the cultural binary that informs the lived experiences and perceptions of this new audience, who represent a new generation of "Kiwis". These bicultural Kiwis provide a blended insight that reads cinematic texts with a double lens that is informed by their experiences as negotiators of two cultural spaces, knowledges and etiquettes. At its core "'transnationalism' broadly refers to multiple ties and

[6] It was stated that "the Committee strongly encourage that ethnicity data be collected as part of the research project as a right to express their self-identity." This reinforced the acknowledgment of ethnicity at several points during the process: at the recruitment stage (staff members utilised school data bases to access student enrollment information), and a sign-in sheet at the beginning of each focus group asking participants to acknowledge their name, school year and ethnicity. Several times throughout the discussion, participants were encouraged to stipulate their cultural binary as they perceived it. Finally, a follow up form was sent home with participants' parents to fill out, acknowledging their own ethnicities. This final stage was the least successful, with forms not being returned by the majority of participants.

interactions linking people or institutions across the borders of nation-states" (Vertovec 447). These ties and interactions inform the positionality of the bicultural audience, and build upon the concepts of established audience reception.

As mentioned, I align my findings and analyses alongside already established research that works to articulate the viewing practices and engagements of minority audiences by bell hooks (1990) and Stuart Hall (1989, 2012). However, the way we as the bicultural audience occupy the space between (the mainstream and secondary cultural space) means that we percieve and engage with cinematic narratives differently. The bicultural "[e]xperience is the test of cultural conventions, the test of their efficacy, of their adequacy. Experience also allows us to imagine the disjuncture between culture as a limited and selected field of representations" (Highmore 96). The limitations of cinematic representation has led to the development of a viewing process that allows for extraction of narrative detail that correlates with experiences of inbetweenness. Unlike the African American and Māori audiences, we are hardly represented, or even established as visible in mainstream cinema. This lack of representation leads to affiliation with other minorities on screen, or a unique engagement with aspects of the narrative or character relationships. Due to the lack of representation of bicultural people or bicultural experiences in NZ national cinema, I discuss how the bicultural audience shifts its search from looking for a familiar face or experience, to finding specific details of a character, character relationship or narrative that are analogously and metaphorically applicable.

1.3 Definitions

For this thesis, it is important to define several terms that are either new, or that I apply in a different manner to those who have used them in previous scholarship. These definitions help to avoid confusion, and provide parameters in terms of scope and clarity, situating the bicultural audience and their identity structures within a contemporary NZ context.

1.3.1 Bicultural Audience:

The participants who chose to partake in the focus groups meet the following criteria, which defines the bicultural audience for the purpose of this thesis. This definition, that I developed and then utilised as criteria to recruit participants, provides an underlying link between participants and across the wider audience: they are all born in NZ, but still convey diversity through individual secondary cultures. I aim to provide

a representation of the bicultural audience that is as diverse as possible, while recognizing the following features that are shared by these bicultural New Zealanders:

- A bicultural person has one or both parents who have immigrated to NZ prior to their birth; therefore, making the bicultural person a NZ-born citizen to immigrant parent/s.

- The parent/s of the bicultural person will have emigrated from a country whose culture is distinctly established. An example of a "non-bicultural" person would be someone whose parent/s immigrated from Australia to NZ prior to their birth. Both countries have a history heavily entrenched in their relationship to the colonial motherland, Britain. Therefore, there are no distinct mainstream differences between the two countries and cultural identities that warrant a binary of cultural knowledge and space. There is no need to move between and negotiate two cultural spaces and apply alternative cultural knowledge, as is the case for those in the bicultural audience. However, one could argue that a child born in NZ whose parent/s is an Australian citizen and who was raised in an Aboriginal community can come under the definition of "bicultural". This would then be an exception to the rule applied to NZ children born to an Australian parent/s, as would a person born in NZ to a Native American parent/s raised in the United States, but in a Native American community.

- Due to the focus of my study being narrowed down to people who are born in NZ to immigrant parents, I will not include Māori in the bicultural audience. This is because – in theory – within NZ, Māori space is not a defined space. There is no space where Māori culture cannot be practiced. The NZ identity is rooted in and informed by Māori culture and cultural practices. Māori language and etiquette is incorporated and reinforced from very early on in NZ primary education. While Māori are an indigenous group with practices reserved for Māori only, their cultural space arguably resides in and across NZ/Aotearoa. This is unlike those whose cultural space has been confined to specific communal areas (a church, for example) or home.

- A bicultural person is raised in NZ.

1.3.2 Culture:

This term relates to the idea that identity stems from the nation-state, or what Benedict Anderson refers to as the "imagined community" (49). He defines this as a socially constructed community, built upon the notion that all people living within a geographical boundary are interconnected. This concept of the constructed community thus allows for new developments in what is defined as the "Kiwi" identity and being a New Zealanders. One's familial heritage becomes less than important the active participation in sharing space. Thus, contributing new cultural knowledges to the established NZ identity can be perceived and enlightening, rather than threatening. Anderson states below his issues with the concept of nationhood:

> Part of the difficulty is that one tends unconsciously to hypostasize the existence of Nationalism-with-a-big-N…and then to classify "it" as *an* ideology. It would, I think, make things easier if one treated it as if it belonged with 'kinship' and 'religion'. (5)

By referring to national identity (the mainstream culture for the purpose of this study) not as an ideology but as 'kinship', the theory of bicultural identity (BIT) becomes more tangible and more complex. While the cultural knowledge and rules that informs the traditional national identity are applicable to a larger space than that of the secondary culture, the *way* the knowledge is utilised to navigate the space is the same as that of the individual secondary culture. The relationship between the national identity – that is the NZ identity – and the secondary cultural identity – that of the immigrant parent, become two sides of the same coin.

For the purpose of this study, parents of focus group participants and the wider bicultural audience are referred to as "Transnational" citizens. Vertovec's definition of transnationalism (see above) encapsulates the assumed relationship that parents have with the cultural identity and space that they left behind when they immigrated, and the way they embody their new status as Kiwis. "Transnational individuals have nuanced motivations underlying their identity choices because of their connection with at least two cultural settings" (Chan 3), which in turn translates to the exposure, and therefore the relationship, the bicultural audience has to their secondary culture in a NZ context. In her study "Transnational parenting practices of Chinese immigrant families in NZ" (2017), Chan addresses the ways Chinese immigrant parents acknowledged the distinctions between Early Childhood Education (ECE) pedagogies in NZ and China.

Interesting outcomes included the way parents were able to see how the teacher-oriented (China) versus child-oriented style of ECE NZ impacted on learning, and the way that parents contextualised their children's levels of learning and comprehension (Chan 8).

This study acknowledged how cultural expectation can influence educational learning, and also illustrated that "…all of the participants were keen for their children to develop dual heritage, which could be useful for their transnational activities" (Chan 6). Although I focus on the bicultural viewing processes of the bicultural audience, and not their parents, it is important to recognize the enormous influence that immigrant parents have in the construction of their child's bicultural identity. As demonstrated in Chan's research, immigrant parents are "…active agents in deciding their childrearing practices. Cultural flexibility was demonstrated as they navigated and negotiated between the cultural expectations of the two countries" (Chan 8). It cannot be underestimated how the relationship that parents have to the mainstream and secondary culture can become a template for their offspring.

Unlike other New Zealanders who have cultural, familial and historical ties to the same place in which they were born and raised, the bicultural audience face the obstacle of growing up in a space that, by birth status they belong to, but which provides a set of rules, expectations and knowledge that is alternative to that which their parents are familiar with. It could be argued that it is due to this dual knowledge, bicultural people are more capable of consciously recognising and articulating the construction and application of cultural identity in the NZ and secondary space. The inherent nature, or the "taken-for-granted" (Anderson 12) perception, of national identity loses its veil and becomes subject to comparison and critique because of the dichotomy of primary (national) and secondary space that the bicultural person continually negotiates.

Culture can influence the construction and dynamic of attitudes, social relations and the relationship to space. Moral guidelines, familial relationships, community dynamics and social interactions are all behaviours reinforced and normalized in their repetition within a group or society that inhabit a space. Culture can therefore be defined as a core of information that becomes the foundation for the performative aspect of identity for a community or group of people. In the case of the bicultural audience, the body of knowledge is circumstantially interchangeable, but consistently influential

on their perspectives, opinions, and positions both within the NZ population and, in the case of this thesis, in terms of their cinematic engagement.

For the bicultural audience, being born in one place (NZ) and having cultural, familial and historical ties to somewhere else (Immigrant parent/s' country of origin) is an influential factor in regard to how participants relate to filmic narratives and characters. This occurs to varying degrees, subject to each bicultural person's internal cultural hierarchy. This hierarchy of the cultural binary is dictated by which of the two cultures is more readily accessible, applicable and – either consciously or subconsciously – preferred by the individual. This approach of the bicultural person to their internal cultural hierarchy changes and reshapes as they grow and gain autonomy over their level of involvement in their secondary culture. However, for the purpose of this research, I recognize that the level of engagement of these younger participants with their two cultures is in large part left to their parents/caregivers, as discussed further in chapter two. Therefore, an assumption regarding each individual's cultural hierarchy is that they have access and exposure to both the mainstream culture (NZ) and their secondary culture that make up their binary.

1.3.3 Secondary culture

The bicultural identity is based on the concept that either one or both parents bring to their role as a parent and member of society a body of cultural knowledge from their homeland. This knowledge informs how they raise their children, and influences what they deem morally important to pass on as they grow. This body of knowledge is expanded as they resettle in NZ, and acquire new knowledge and comprehension of the space and etiquette. This allows them to evolve "… through learning and adopting new practices from the host country, balanced with relinquishing certain traditional expectations that were perceived to be no longer practical and applicable" (Chan 8). However, there is always a distinction between the two cultures, which is defined by particular spaces and situations.

The construction of the cultural binary within the identity of the bicultural person will be discussed in chapter two, but it is important to acknowledge how that binary of culture will be referred to and why. It is assumed that for all participants in the focus groups and therefore everyone in the bicultural audience, there is an internal hierarchy of cultural knowledge. This means that one cultural knowledge (for example the NZ cultural knowledge) is called upon more by the bicultural person due to its

contextual applicability, elevating it to a higher ranking (however subconsciously) and therefore becoming the "mainstream" culture. This is due to the nature of identity structure; "…identity is a dynamic construct that changes over time and context and varies across individuals" (Phinney (1996 145). The different levels of acknowledgement and integration vary between individuals. There levels vary from those who view their two cultures as compatible i.e. the two cultures complement each other and share similarities, to those who view them as highly distinct and oppositional i.e. there are elements in each culture that contradict the other. Whether the two cultures are complementary or contradictory, the bicultural audience – assuming that they have regular exposure to both cultural knowledges and spaces – are capable of identifying "…with both cultures, even if it is not at the same level" (Bennet-Martinez et al 495). This difference in engagement creates a hierarchy that is likely to change over time, and is subject to a multitude of influences, including familial dynamics, parental engagement with each space, and the local and minority community. At the top of that hierarchy is the NZ culture; it is the first culture participants reference in terms of identifying themselves, and therefore informs their decisions. This means that the other culture that informs their identity necessarily becomes secondary to the NZ culture.

I refer to the non-NZ culture as the secondary culture, not as a lesser reference to the importance of this culture, but in terms of its application to the environment that these bicultural people are raised in. The space that Kiwi cultural knowledge occupies is more expansive; the secondary culture is confined to the space that it is allocated. The importance of both cultures that create the binary is equal, but like language, it is not equal in its applicability or conscious acknowledgment.

1.3.4 Cultural knowledge, etiquette and space:

The cultural knowledge of the immigrant parent informs their own sense of identity within the NZ context and their position in society, as well as influencing the style of child rearing they use and the moral guidelines that are practiced within the family home. This dual recognition of both cultures, the need for balance and their level of impact on the bicultural child is mirrored in a response from Vicky, a Chinese immigrant parent, in Chan's research; "Within Chinese immigrant families, we, on the one hand, pay more attention to traditional Chinese virtues; on the other hand, we will also consider the 'Kiwi' virtues" (6). There is a conscious recognition by the immigrant parents in relation to the level of impact caused by dual cultural influences, and an

ongoing balance of acknowledging the importance of embracing "Kiwi virtues", while maintaining a strong connection to the secondary culture.

Of course, the approach to the binary of cultures is highly subjective. I acknowledge that no one who took part in the focus groups who fit the bicultural criteria was of Chinese descent[7], and Chan's research is focused on education structures rather than film spectatorship. However, her study sheds light on how a portion of immigrant parents can perceive, engage with and, to an extent, help their children to navigate the two cultural knowledges, etiquettes and space. I do not apply Chan's findings to all of the parents of the participants; I merely use these findings as exemplary of one approach to raising bicultural children in a NZ context. Parents place emphasis on what they deem is important, and that will allow their children to grow to their full potential. Therefore, some parents more than others may impart cultural knowledge to their children in the form of traditions, language, familial (and sometimes gendered-orientated) dynamics, and social etiquette.

In his chapter "Anthropology and psychology: an unrequited relationship" (1992), Theodore Schwartz recognizes the embedded, fluid nature of cultural knowledge, etiquette and space. For this thesis, cultural etiquette is defined as a system of rules and guidelines that inform how traditions, familial and social dynamics are practiced, and how the cultural identity is engaged, consisting of:

> derivatives of experience, more or less organised, learned or created by the individuals of a population, including those images or encodements and their interpretations (meanings) transmitted from past generations, from contemporaries, or formed by individuals themselves…culture must be acquired by each individual both in interaction with others, through mediated and direct experience of its environment, and through internal process and production. (324-325)

Many of the secondary cultures of the focus group participants may share similarities with the NZ culture, but if there are contrasts, often it will be in the realm of etiquette and knowledge. All cultural etiquette comes with expectations. What is different in this instance is how two sets of cultural etiquette are applied to one

[7] Emily, from focus group B, was of Chinese descent. However, she was born in China and adopted by New Zealand parents so therefore did not meet the bicultural criteria, and her responses were not used in this thesis.

bicultural person, and intertwine to inform their overall perspective. These two cultural etiquettes sometimes alternate in their applicability to space and situations; other times they can overlap or interlock. Identity, and therefore cultural knowledge, etiquette and space are constantly in flux:

> More recently, psychologists have shown that individuals can possess dual cultural identities and engage in active cultural frame switching, in which they move between different cultural meaning systems in response to situational cues. (Benet-Martinez et al 2002 493)

The familial dynamic and exposure to the secondary culture initially dictates how successful each bicultural individual is in active cultural frame switching. It can be assumed that in early life, applicability decides which etiquette becomes top of the personal cultural hierarchy; however, this is a hierarchy that is subject to change over the course of their lives.

The cultural space is where the engagement of cultural knowledge and etiquette is applied and reinforced. For each space, there is a cultural knowledge and etiquette (mentioned above) that is expected to be applied correctly. In contrast to NZ European parents, immigrant parents do not have an inherent relationship with their geographical environment. The space that immigrant parent/s grew up in is not the space where they have chosen to raise their children, so the relationship to locale and the wider environment is also altered for the child. There are no familial or historical ties to the land. The familiarity of the space that the bicultural person lives in is dictated by parental familiarity and engagement with that space; so too is their knowledge and etiquette of the landscape. This knowledge can take the shape of ownership, local *Iwi*[8], historical events, or the *tapu*[9] status of some spaces[10]. This means that cultural

[8] "[an] extended kinship group, tribe, nation, people, nationality, race - often refers to a large group of people descended from a common ancestor and associated with a distinct territory." (Māori Dictionary 2017).

[9] "[to] (stative) be sacred, prohibited, restricted, set apart, forbidden, under atua protection." (Māori Dictionary 2017)

[10] It should be noted that both *Iwi* and *tapu* are of integral importance to Māori identity structure, development and relationship to space. While I do not develop on Māori identity and whakapapa (geneaology) in this thesis, it is important to acknowledge that Māori space ownership and belonging in relation to geographical space is vastly different to that of the immigrant parent and subsequently the bicultural person. Creating a historically informed community, or *Iwi*, and developing guidelines and traditions informed by the relationship to the geographical landscape are features that do not inform the bicultural identity the same way it does with Māori.

knowledge and etiquette exercised in the immigrant parent's country of origin, which they then choose to employ in the home, may (for outsiders and at times for the bicultural person) seem irrelevant. In theory, there is no allocated space for the immigrant parent/s to practice their cultural knowledge and etiquette, and the implications of this can lead to spaces like the home becoming re-categorized as the secondary cultural space. In creating the home as the space for the secondary culture to be incorporated into daily living, the wider society then becomes the space for the mainstream culture. The binary is thus formed and reinforced by the bicultural person's immigrant parent/s, and the wider societal structure of NZ.

Occasionally, the secondary culture is practiced in a communal space by a community who share the same country of origin (cultural societies, or sites that are purchased by a community who share a cultural background and religious beliefs). This space then becomes the main site of secondary cultural practice. Very early on, bicultural children comprehend the difference between the national and secondary etiquettes and knowledge, and are able to predict (or read situations) where they are applicable or expected[11]. The conscious acknowledgment of this binary of identity, knowledge and space is perhaps overlooked, and only really becomes visible when a bicultural person realises that fewer "rules" apply to the non-bicultural individual[12]. An example of secondary cultural space would be the Samoan Catholic Community hall in Dunedin[13]; the primary cultural space is subsequently the wider Dunedin landscape. Each of these spaces require different cultural knowledge in order to be negotiated correctly, and so for the bicultural person, there is a transition between the two spaces. It is this ability to interchange between the binary of cultural identity and knowledge

[11] The different levels of acknowledgment and integration does vary between individuals, from those who view their two cultures as compatible, to those who view them as highly distinct and oppositional. Taking this into consideration, it should also be noted that focus group participants (and it is assumed the wider bicultural audience) "...identify with both cultures, even if not at the same level" (Bennet-Martinez et al 2002 495). This is developed further in chapter two.

[12] A simple example could be seen in what is expected of a bicultural person in terms of language or familial responsibility. A bicultural person could be expected to be fluent in both English and their parent/s' native language, as well as having the responsibility of translating or breaking down the NZ NCEA system, as their parent/s would have undergone a different structure, or, as is the case for a portion of parents of biculturals, not had the opportunity to complete their school education. Non-bicultural people would not necessarily experience these hurdles; it can be assumed that their parents may not have the same obstacles to overcome.

[13] The Samoan Catholic Church community hall and church is a space that is owned by the community and is where are religious and social events are held. The space can be perceived as a replication of a Samoan village structure, where traditional values and social structures as upheld, and the Samoan language and etiquette are championed. More information regarding the Samoan social structure can be found in David Stanley's book *The South Pacific* (2004).

that becomes central to informing the perceptions and spectatorship of the bicultural audience.

1.4 Method

In choosing participants to take part in the focus groups for this study, I chose three High Schools that I have, prior to this research, been involved with[14]. As a result, the response from two of the schools was efficient and positive. This familiarity allowed for a sense of trust between myself and the staff, which led to both schools catering to my research[15].

Together with the staff at both schools, I discussed the relevance and importance of all participants having either one or both immigrant parents from a non-Western country, and having the status of being a NZ-born citizen. I explained how these criteria provided boundaries and created a common ground that all participants and therefore the wider bicultural audience, would share regardless of cultural background. It would be the experience of having a binary of cultures that the bicultural audience would share, not the cultures that make the binary. Participants ranged in age from 13 -18 years old. This was so I would include as many participants from as many different cultural backgrounds as possible within the High Schools I worked with. Instead of having the focus groups after school – which I had initially intended to do – both schools made allowances so that the focus groups would take place during school time[16].

Initially, three focus groups were meant to take place over the period of May 18-26. One focus group was to consist of eight female students from a single sex High School, one with eight male students from a single sex High School, and one with a combination four male and four female students from the same co-educational Catholic

[14] I attended the all-female High School as a student, and had previous work engagements with a staff member at the co-educational school.

[15] Each school allocated sections of the school day for the focus group to take place and cooperated in the recruitment process. One senior staff member stated that although there are many researchers who contacted the school looking for participants to partake in studies, they were rejected.

[16] After an initial email exchange with staff members from both schools, I organised a consultation at each school (May 5 and May 10) to organise the logistics of each focus group (where the focus groups would take place), as well as the time frame and criteria that needed to be met by each participant (stated in the next section).

High School[17]; all located in Dunedin. However, with no response from the all-boys High School, the focus groups were limited to one all-female, and one mixed. The decision to not pursue a third all-male focus group was largely influenced by the limitations that surfaced once the mixed focus group was completed, which I discuss further in chapter two.

I chose to do focus groups for this thesis in order to provide new data that would accurately represent this new audience, specifically within a NZ context. Focus groups would allow participants to share ideas, to make connections and comparisons between their own viewing experience and that of their peers. Further, while the viewing process is a highly subjective experience – it is influenced by a myriad of factors (including familial preferences and the reinforcement of cultural etiquette, and personal as well as social engagement with cinematic texts). Through an introductory icebreaker exercise, participants were encouraged to discuss their first cinematic memories. I chose to use High School students for each of the focus groups, because it limited the age range, and each of the schools recruited participants who met the criteria.

The focus group participants were chosen based on the criteria of the bicultural audience, which is covered in the definitions section. The main points of difference between participants were their age, cultural background and gender. It can also be assumed that there was some discrepancy in socioeconomic backgrounds of each participant. However, this is not a factor that was followed up in the forms, due to the focus of the study being centred around participant film viewership. Further, through discussion with staff members, levels of literacy among parents varied, which would have made it difficult for some to provide the required information[18]. Age, cultural background and gender are therefore listed as relevant influences on participant responses during the focus group sessions, and are taken into consideration in the developing analysis of their viewing processes and spectatorship in chapter two and

[17] Working with participants from a Catholic High School meant that there was an assumption made about the home life of participants in group B. The impact of this religious backdrop is illustrated in the sections to come, which detail how cinema is utilised to convey moral and religious messages. However, it is clear from the focus group discussions that the Catholic High school and its pupils do not differ considerably in their viewing habits from those in focus group A. Due to word count, I do not go into detail about the culture of either school; both are public, mainstream Dunedin High schools.

[18] In the gathering of permission forms, one staff member who worked closely with parents of several of the participants, stated that she signed permission on behalf of the parents who were unable to complete the information sheet of the form. This situation reveals some of the unforeseen obstacles that arise when working with such a diverse group as young bicultural audiences.

three. Each participant is given pseudonyms to protect their identity and privacy. The all-female focus group is referred to as group A and the mixed focus group is referred to as group B.

In preparation for the focus groups, I completed a practice run with one male and three female participants, aged between 13-18 years old. Through this practice run, I made small changes to the specificity of my questions, the way viewing practices were related to identity through question lay out, and how I used the title "bicultural". As I conducted this initial practice, it became obvious that I would have to clearly define "bicultural", and articulate the relevance of this term to each of the focus group members. As acknowledged in my question outline, I stated the importance of the study as well as the definition of "bicultural" at the end of the focus group. I chose to stipulate this at the end to avoid priming participants with information that may have altered their responses through the discussion.

1.5 Research Objectives

The purpose of this research is to critically analyse the films (which surfaced during focus group discussion) that become habitual watching in the family home, and the different ways the bicultural audience engage with cinematic narratives. These modes of discussion provide a way of understanding factors that influence the viewing habits of participants, as well as features that they identify with in mainstream cinema. Further, I investigate how these bicultural people create comparisons between their personal experiences – obstacles they encounter regarding the binary of the cultural space and cultural knowledge that they interchange on a daily basis – and that of the narratives they choose to engage with. There are several themes I cover in my focus group discussions in order to fully understand the influential factors that shape the bicultural viewing process:

- Habitual family viewing/viewing practices in the home
- Viewing habits with peers and alone (frequency, repetition of watching films)
- Films that focus groups feel represent bicultural experiences
- Favourite film genres/actors
- Criteria for choosing films

- Recommendations for filmmakers in the future

Effectively exploring how these bicultural young people are introduced to film in early life by their parents/caregivers[19], I created discussions in the focus groups that encouraged students to articulate what films they watched with their families, what films they related to, and how they make such connections between films they watch and their own experiences[20]. This process of viewership is discussed at length, particularly in focus group A, where students made insightful connections to narratives and character relationships, reflecting not only on their own experiences, but that of their parents. I provide insight into how young people who are technically "New Zealanders", but who are connected (either actively or inactively) with a culture outside of NZ, feel their experiences influence how they read films. Due to the nature of this study and the focus groups being so diverse, I bring together a myriad of interpretations of cinema narratives and characters that bicultural people feel they most relate to, and deconstruct how these readings reflect what it means to, simultaneously, embody two cultural identities.

1.6 Chapter Outlines

1.6.1 Chapter Two: Identity and Representation

This chapter begins by placing the bicultural audience within a NZ context, using the work of StatisticsNZ (2005, 2013) (Smillie 2002), while interweaving the studies undertaken by Jean S. Phinney (1990, 1996), to focus specifically on bicultural identities' development, influences and effects. Phinney's research – which examines the self-reflexivity of people of mixed ethnicities, and how they interpret their own identities within a Western environment – provides relevant research on the development of the bicultural identity that I chose not to highlight in my focus group discussions. Interrogating viewing habits and processes, as well as the bicultural identity, would have primed participant responses and lowered the legitimacy of their contributions to this thesis. Therefore, I refer to Phinney's findings in relation to the participants' responses to corroborate how identity structure and development

[19] who may or may not have, or relate to, their own national cinema

[20] The findings were dictated by participants' relevant contributions to the research objective of understanding bicultural viewership. Therefore, one of the outcomes of working with participants of this demographic meant that there was more discussion around family viewership than watching films with peers. Family is of higher relevance in this instance, which speaks to the cultural dynamics around bicultural film viewership, which is discussed later in this chapter.

influences the viewing process. Phinney focuses on the malleability of the bicultural identity (though she refers to it differently), and the influences that shape and inform those changes over a lifetime. Similarly, through providing an overview of the then current understanding of ethnic identity development, Phinney conveys how this comprehension can become a tool to deal with the "implications of a diverse society" (144, 1996).

In their 2002 article, Benet-Martinez et al employ the Bicultural Identity Integration (BII) spectrum, which looks at how oppositional or compatible a bicultural person's two cultures are, and how this moderates their ability to frame switch between those two cultural spaces (493). In this article, frame switching is the ability to apply the appropriate cultural knowledge in order to express the correct cultural etiquette as required. Benet-Martinez and Haritatos's article "Bicultural Identity Integration (BII): Components and Psychological Antecedents" (2005) conducts a study featuring Chinese-American biculturals, that examines the connections between bicultural identities and "particular personality dispositions, contextual pressures, and acculturation and demographic variables" (1017). Benet-Martinez and Haritato's emphasis on the influence of environment, cultural expectation and exposure to cultural pratices on the bicultural identity development provides further relevant research that was not covered in the focus groups. Other authors that provide insight into Bicultural psychology and development in this chapter are: Jones (2006), Mok and Morris (2010), and Cheung and Lee (2013). This research informs how the responses of participants regarding film consumption are unpacked and examined through a bicultural lens.

The second half of chapter two discusses the cinematic representations that surfaced in focus group discussions, and introduces responses from focus group participants. Several subthemes influenced the viewing processes of participants:

- Bicultural identity acknowledgement
- Bicultural identity structures
- Family film viewing habits:
- Pt I: Film as education
- Pt II: Film as reflective of cultural structures and boundaries

- Pt III: Film as representation

Introducing these sections provides a framework that illustrates how identity structures, familial dynamics, and viewing habits inform the development of individual bicultural viewing processes e.g. the way parents of participants utilise film according to their own exposure to different films, and the accessibility/existence of a national cinema, created interesting dialogue around the underlying purpose of cinema in the home that went further than simple entertainment.

This section provides a transition into chapter three, where I discuss in-depth the different examples that the participants provided, and how they related to those films. The scholarship from related psychological studies provides insight that I discuss in chapter three with regard to the data collected from the focus groups. By providing this initial summary of psychological research conducted on the development and effects of bicultural identity, I provide a starting point that grounds this research in already established scholarship.

1.6.2 Chapter Three: Spectatorship

In this final chapter, I move to elaborate on the bicultural viewing process of mainstream cinematic texts, in reference to the spectator scholarship of W.E.B. Du Bois (2008), bell hooks (1990, 1992), Stuart Hall (1989, 1992), and Patricia Hill Collins' concept of "flexible solidarity" (2017). These academics look at how minority groups view and engage with mainstream texts and minority representations.

These authors provide insight into different minority audiences' use of different texts, which provide context to the contribution I make through this study of NZ bicultural audiences. bell hooks interrogates how the black female audience engages with mainstream cinema and, in particular their process of relating to white bodies and white stories onscreen. Jones' contribution is distinctive in the way her audience utilised literary texts. Her study of female focus groups from British-Asian and North-West Wales investigates the bilingual nature of her participants' engagement. Jones' research provides an alternative understanding of texts via meaning, and meaning-making.

These two chapters put minority viewership at the forefront, acknowledging the variety of different effects and responses the filmic depictions elicited. While the bicultural audience's presence is harder to trace, these readings acknowledge other minority groups and their spectatorship – or in Jones's case, readership. By aligning the

newly recognized bicultural cinematic engagement with these studies, we can begin to recognize similarities across different minority groups in terms of their relationship to mainstream texts. hooks' work "The Oppositional Gaze: Black Female Spectatorship" alludes to the power of the gaze for the minority within the minority: black women. Isolated in their minimal acknowledgment on screen and in academic audience research, the bicultural audience is, in its infancy, similar to the black female audience that is of central importance to hooks' work.

In her discussion of the oppositional gaze, hooks discusses how black female audience members would go through a transition in order to get pleasure from cinema. In interviews, hooks discovered that escapism was a large part of the cinematic process for black women, who, in order to engage the pleasure to be had from cinema, had to actively turn off their racial and gendered analysis of the film (120). I liken this process of engagement with that of the bicultural audience, who will, in part, employ a similar process when viewing films. This escapism is encapsulated by several participant responses in chapter two and three.

That said, I acknowledge that these minorities have limited experiential common ground with the bicultural audience. Specifically, historically speaking African American men and women were taken from their homeland, and put at the bottom of the social, cultural and socioeconomic Western hierarchy. The African American relationship to the land and their space is a contested one; their history is one fraught with criminal injustice and prejudice beyond what I am able to cover here. African American culture is embedded in American culture, yet it could be argued that it is not recognized as such. The problem with African American representation and acknowledgment in media and film is not only the lack thereof, but who is sanctioned to curate such representations. It is this issue of authorship and how minority representation impacts on minority audiences that I discuss in relation to bell hooks' work. Providing a comparison between African American representation and bicultural representation, I acknowledge that while the historically-informed aspects differ quite substantially, both audiences' relationship to these representations are similar.

Furthermore, while I do not directly recall my own experiences frequently throughout this thesis, my bicultural status influences my approach in regards to what is relevant to this study, and how I conduct the focus groups. The questions I asked the participants are culturally sensitive, and also allude to cultural restrictions that may have

applied to what they watched with their family as children, as well as what was accessible. However, the generalised nature of the questions, which were designed to avoid priming, did limit the relevant data discussed in this thesis. Each participants' relationship to who they relate on screen (and how) differs significantly from mine. However, in having my own process that results in viewing pleasure as a bicultural person, I ground my findings in this knowledge, and can therefore provide some insight in relation to the data I gain from the focus groups.

1.7 Parameters (theoretical assumptions/time and resource restraints)

For this thesis, I have chosen to refer to the audience I am studying as bicultural and *not* biracial. The term "biracial" comes with connotations that detract from my main focus, which is young people who are born in NZ, but whose cultural background is informed by knowledge outside of the NZ context. Using the term "biracial" can cause confusion as to the circumstances of the ethnicity of this audience, and would also mean that those young people who have two parents who have immigrated from the same non-Western country to NZ would be excluded. I want to extend my research beyond the literal binary that I, myself, embody (one NZ European parent, one non-Western parent).

A child whom is born in NZ to two immigrant parents is just as much a "kiwi" as a child whom has one parent who is third generation NZ European. If anything, including bicultural people born to two immigrant parents in NZ will provide a greater comprehension of this cultural space binary, and the complex development of the bicultural identity in a NZ environment. The contrast of knowledge and expectation in each space is more pronounced and therefore allows for a different combination that informs a bicultural identity, and an alternative set of obstacles than that of someone who is born of only one immigrant parent. My priority as a researcher is to provide a title and a base definition of the cinematic viewing processes of a group that embody two different cultural identities; resulting in a person who arguably does not 100% fit into either culture, but maintains an in-flux position of in-between-ness.

In terms of genetic makeup, a bicultural person may be of Lebanese descent[21], but being born in NZ complicates this identity. Had this person been born in Beirut, it would have been a straight forward development of an identity that is informed by the

[21] It is noted that Danica from focus group A is of Lebanese descent.

culture of their birthplace. What is interesting about the NZ bicultural audience is that first generation NZ-born[22] bicultural young people will encounter questions and decisions that their parents have not faced. These questions and decisions include: why two cultural knowledges apply to one person, how one should develop an effective personal cultural hierarchy, and how to negotiate the two cultural spaces and etiquettes as required. Parents of these bicultural students will fall into one of two categories; category one is that they are NZ-European with an identity only influenced by living in NZ and *being* a New Zealanders. Alternatively, in category two they have been raised in their home country, where the national identity has influenced their identity development, and they have then moved to NZ. From here, the parent's identity will fall into two subcategories: either they assimilate and begin to embody the NZ identity, leaving their first cultural identity to become secondary, or they continue to embody their first cultural identity in the NZ context, and make subjective adjustments that allows them to engage with and become a contributing participant of the community. In either case, a *choice* is made.

Children born into the circumstance of having to alternatively articulate two cultural etiquettes will form opinions over the course of their lives based on their experiences in both cultural spaces, and the exposure they have to the non-Western culture that they embody. The perceptions bicultural people hold of their secondary or non-NZ culture will be informed by the educational, social, and cultural knowledge they receive in NZ. They will in turn critique their non-Western cultural influence with an objectivity they may not have had, if they been raised in the country from which their parent/s immigrated. This also works vice versa, with evaluations of NZ culture, social structure and expectations constantly taking place. This constant self-awareness of the bicultural aspect of their identity, being a point of difference, impacts on a bicultural person's choices and decisions, from what they wear, to what they watch. It is important to note the changes in film tastes and preferences that take place from when the bicultural students in the focus groups were younger, to now in their mid-late teens, and how the cultural etiquette engaged in the family home influences these preferences.

While I understand that it would be more economical in terms of time to focus on one cultural binary (and it has been expressed that focusing on one ethnic group with

[22] In this thesis, I define first-generation New Zealanders as those who are born in New Zealand to either one or both parents who have immigrated from a non-Western country.

the NZ/Other binary may be more effective), I have chosen to include as many young people of NZ bicultural status as possible within my focus groups. By creating a platform that engages *all* bicultural people within the NZ context instead of one specific binary (for example NZ/European and a nation in the Pacific Islands[23]), my research can explore multiple bicultural perspectives, making the study more extensive and allowing for comparisons of similarities and contrasts to be examined within the bicultural audience. Thus, this approach expands my data set to allow for further research projects, such as work on policies relating to minority audiences, to develop directly from this thesis.

Further, the issue has been raised that by using the word "bicultural" in relation to the audience in this thesis, there may be some confusion for many who affiliate such a term with the Māori[24] identity, and the bicultural nature of the Māori /Pākehā[25] identity. I do not contest the cultural binary of Māori identity, and the issues that Māori face in a NZ context in relation to cinematic representation and authorship. However, I do not focus this research around the Māori bicultural identity specifically because their relationship to cultural space – and the historical significance of the NZ landscape in relation to their cultural identity development – is different to that of those who are born in NZ to immigrant parent/s. Māori are indigenous to Aotearoa[26], and therefore their claim to the land and the identity of what is means to be a New Zealanders contrasts to that of the bicultural audience addressed in this thesis. Bicultural people do not have an established identity where they historically belong to the nation in which they are born. The bicultural audience's relationship to their identity, cinematic representation and spectatorship continues to be contested throughout their lives, because they will never solely belong to one cultural group. It is this contention of identity and belonging, and

[23] The Pacific Islands refers to the Island nations located on the Pacific Ocean. These nations include (but are not limited to) Samoa, Tonga, the Cook Islands, Niue, Fiji and Kiribati.

[24] Māori are first nation people of New Zealand; "Māori are the tangata whenua – the people of the land. In over 700 years of settlement, they have shown an extraordinary ability to adapt first to a new environment and then to the arrival of European immigrants and culture" (Te Ahukaramū Charles Royal 2018). For more information on the history of Māori, see "Te Ara, Encyclopedia of New Zealand".

[25] Pākehā refers to "New Zealander of European descent - probably originally applied to English-speaking Europeans living in Aotearoa/New Zealand. According to Mohi Tūrei, an acknowledged expert in Ngāti Porou tribal lore, the term is a shortened form of *pakepakehā*, which was a Māori rendition of a word or words remembered from a chant used in a very early visit by foreign sailors for raising their anchor" (Māori Dictionary 2017).

[26] See footnote 23

the impact that it has on bicultural viewing processes, that is of interest and, therefore, the primary focus of this thesis.

I chose to work with High School students because of the connections I have in the community, specifically with staff members. Moreover, I have previous experience working with young children and teenagers, from my familial background as well as working in schools and as a tutor. I was interested to see what topics were covered by the students in the presence of their peers, both of the same sex and the opposite sex. Finally, it should be acknowledged that one of the High Schools that focus group B attended is a religious school, whose education, identity and procedures are informed by the Catholic faith. However, I do not feel this detracts from the purpose of these focus groups. Rather, it provides another element to the multiple bicultural perspectives being explored. In time, I hope that a more extensive research project will continue the theme of NZ bicultural audience reception, with a wider age group and a greater assortment of cultural binaries.

As a bicultural person, it is not difficult to understand how a participant might process a film or engage with representation. What might be more difficult is sufficiently describing the viewing process that is natural to me, but is (due to lack of research or acknowledgment in many fields) foreign to the vast majority of society. Further, in attempting to articulate a comprehensive overview of the viewing processes of the bicultural participants of my focus groups, it can more often than not be difficult provide sufficient modality for each step in the viewing process. This is further complicated by the demographic of the focus groups (age, gender,) which I cover further in chapter two. Finding a correlation between the participants' viewing processes is unlikely due to the diversity of the group, and while I acknowledge similarities between the bicultural participants' viewing processes as they arise, I make an effort to avoid generalisations and stereotypes. Instead I interweave the focus group data with previous research, making conclusions informed by other focus group responses and studies that focus on bicultural identity development.

1.8 Conclusion

Bicultural audiences and their viewing processes is a topic that should be recognized, especially here in NZ. It is a multicultural country, whose many influences have for several decades been sourced outside of the original colonial states of Scotland,

Ireland and Britain[27]. Yet, to my knowledge, this is the first study of its kind in NZ (and presently in the world) that looks at the film viewing processes of the bicultural audience. Taking this into consideration, I have cast the net as widely as possible by including bicultural participants of diverse cultural backgrounds, in order to create a platform for this research to be taken further, and in as many different directions as possible. The beauty and curse of a project like this, lies in its ability to acknowledge an audience that is not new, but an audience that has for years gone unacknowledged academically. My goal for this thesis is not to provide qualitative research that reaches definitive conclusions, but to bring awareness to the unique nature of what it means to view, process, and consume cinema through a bicultural point of view. Through the diversity of the bicultural audience, there will be vibrant differences, but also the underlying commonality of the in-between-ness that is the synthesis of what it means to be a bicultural person in NZ.

[27] "In total, 213 ethnic groups were identified in the census, whereas there are 196 countries recognized by Statistics New Zealand." (Census 2013: More ethnicities than the world's countries 2013)

Chapter 2
Identity and Representation

2.1 Introduction

A viewer-led study, this chapter places the bicultural audience within a context of population growth, national consciousness and in the midst of research that provides insight into how bicultural identities are formed and continue to evolve. I begin with an introduction of statistics directly related to the growth of the bicultural population within NZ, as well as some of the issues around identity, and what it means to identify oneself – both internally and to relation to others – for focus group participants, I then go into an in-depth discussion of the challenges as well as the successes of the focus groups, and the themes that rose out of the discussions.

Focusing on representation in the latter section of this chapter specifically provides a transition into chapter three, where I examine and articulate the very basic cinematic engagements of the bicultural audience. Retrospectively, I use the examples and discussion points provided in this chapter to illustrate how we might think about the bicultural audience reception of film. By creating dialogue around the early exposure of bicultural audiences to film, and the way that the cultural binary of the mainstream NZ culture and secondary culture are reinforced through viewing choices in the home, we can begin to understand how viewing processes relating to narratives and characters onscreen are developed.

I start this chapter with an outline and definition of identity, specifically the bicultural identity, followed by discussion of bicultural psychological research that has been carried out by Phinney (1990, 1996), LaFromboise et al. (1993), Bennet-Martinez et al. (2002, 2005), Mok and Morris (2010), and Cheung and Lee (2013). These studies provide different perspectives on how the bicultural identity is developed, what it is influenced by and how the binaries in cultures inform decision making and self-reflection.

2.2 Contextualising The Bicultural Audience

Born into a space and society that may have partial or no historical relevance at all, bicultural people complicate this complex ideology around identity. Informed by the NZ culture and a secondary culture, influenced by a binary of social etiquettes, the

bicultural identity creates a layered identity of knowledge, expectation, etiquette and contradiction. Each level is constantly interchanging, overlapping, informing and contrasting against each other. This study draws parallels between the multifaceted bicultural identity structures and the way these factors influence and inform the bicultural viewing process. Regarding the television audience, Ien Ang argues in her book "Living Room Wars: Rethinking Media Audiences for a Postmodern World" that "… [it] is becoming increasingly fragmented, individualized, dispersed, no longer addressable as a mass or as a single market" (67), yet mainstream Hollywood cinema continues to address the audience as such. Audience research that connects mainstream cinemas with negotiated readings by diverse spectators can bridge the gap between content and consumer, avoiding "...making universalistic generalisations that wash out critical shades of difference" (Khagram and Levitt 4). It is important to understand the factors that shape each bicultural audience member; the viewing process is infused by these interchangeable levels. Of the research that I have conducted, Stuart Hall's definition of identity engages theoretically with how the bicultural identity emerges, and continues to develop over time:

> Perhaps, instead of thinking of identity as an already accomplished historical fact, which the new cinematic discourses then represent, we should think, instead, of identity as a 'production', which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation. (1989 68)

However, I disagree with the end of this description. For many in the bicultural audience, there is no choice but to develop an identity outside of representation, because there is simply no full representation of the bicultural identity, in all its many diverse embodiments. It could be argued that there is a negotiation in cinematic representation

that each bicultural person affiliates with (this is discussed later in the chapter), but it would be unlikely that the bicultural identity is only formed within representation[28].

As aforementioned, the bicultural audience that I focus on in this thesis are High School students who range between year 9-13, who were born in NZ to either one or both parents who have originated from non-western countries[29]. The focus group participants will first be introduced, before I briefly engage the psychological research around bicultural identity. These studies define the bicultural identity and examine its construction, providing insight into the psychological motives and decision-making processes of bicultural people, both independently and as part of a wider bicultural group.

Though the criteria that defines "bicultural" participants in these psychological studies differs from that of my research, these findings illustrate the complexities of identity development that is informed by two cultures, as well as bicultural engagement with texts. Further, it is important to keep tying the bicultural identity to cinematic representation and spectatorship. As Staiger states in her chapter "Reception Studies in Film and Television" (2002) "…the notion of the context - psychological versus social – changes the event into two different situations." (49). There is a difference between the spectator and social audience (Annette Kuhn 2002), which has informed how I approach the two different experiences of film reception. Through the question outline used in the focus groups, I specifically address the social context of participants. This

[28] Statistics NZ provide a more grounded description of identity, which conveys the different factors that can influence not only the cultural binary, but how or if this binary is acknowledged by the individual at all:

> Ethnicity is not fixed. Many aspects of an individual's circumstances affect how they identify their ethnicities and this may differ markedly from how a third party might identify them. Ethnic mobility and contextual effects are quite different components of category jumping, which result in people changing their ethnicity responses. Ethnic mobility refers to people changing how they identify their ethnicity over time (2005 3).

It is an assumption in this study and wider thesis that the bicultural audience includes only those bicultural individuals who identify themselves as such. I recognize that under different circumstances, participants may choose to not acknowledge their secondary culture. However, due to my demographic of participants (High School students aged 13-18 years old), this prerogative is not totally in their control because standard enrolment information was used in the recruitment process. It could be argued that they are not self-aware enough to know that they do actually choose to consciously acknowledge either one or both cultures according to the circumstance. While the mobility of participants should be taken into account, it is how they have been identified by others – official documents such as birth certificates – that has resulted in their inclusion in the focus group research.

[29] The term "Non-western" includes all European countries.

chapter follows the theme of social viewing, and viewing practices in the home, while chapter three examines the bicultural viewing process at a more individual level. The aim of this research is not to solely define the bicultural identity (although it would make the job of articulating the bicultural viewing process much more straight forward), but rather, to put forward a conceptualisation of the different identity structures that come under the umbrella of the "bicultural audience" and how these factor into viewing cinema.

2.3 Assumptions

There are many aspects that need to be considered when discussing identity. Knowledge, comprehension and exposure to the different aspects of the one identity, including whether parents choose to activate the two cultures (NZ and other) in a positive manner, as well as officially (on birth certificates, official documents). Due to time and resource restraints, assumptions have been made on behalf of the focus group participants – who are a snapshot of the wider bicultural audience – not to take away from the subjectivity of each member's cultural binary structure, but to limit confusion as to what criteria one must meet to be a part of the bicultural audience. Further, it should be noted that due to the limitation of time, and in order to create a justified scope for a Masters thesis, I only focus on the *cinematic* viewing processes of the bicultural audience. While I acknowledge that participants – and the wider audience – engage with multiple media sites and texts, it is important that this study only delves into the viewing processes with regard to film only. This limitation allows for an in-depth analysis, and discussion around the unchartered territory that is bicultural viewing practices.

Such provisions are necessary when conducting audience research with a newly recognized minority. As stated by Herman Gray in the foreword of *Say it Loud!* (2002), who recognized the complexity of academic research with minority audiences:

> Black audiences are also subjects, agents, and constellations of community and political interests whose social locations, relations, and identities are historically and culturally constituted…Systematic studies of Black audiences are difficult because they require a sophisticated understanding of all of the constitutive elements and moments in the circuit of production, textualization, and reception of media images and representations. To be done well and thoroughly such studies demand that theoretical, if not empirical, attention be given to the structuring forces, historical circumstances, and social relations within which meanings are made and contested by Black audience members. (vii-viii)

Although scholars approach black audience reception from a historically different place – with representations of black bodies and narratives more plentiful within available cinematic representations (while the correctness of said representation is still rightly contested) – I mirror this approach in the intersectional framework that structures this thesis. It is important to provide insight from different fields, while also acknowledging the shortcomings of qualitative research. In order to strengthen the argument for bicultural audience reception and provide a position for their viewing process in the NZ context.

An example of the confusion that accompanies embodying two cultural identities was illustrated in the focus groups conducted. Since it was under the pretext that participants were chosen based on their cultural heritage, a portion of the participants felt they only needed to write that secondary culture down on the sign in sheet when entering the focus group[30]. This assumption that people, particularly young people will readily acknowledge their entire immediate cultural background, in every situation where they are asked to identify such information, is something I initially overlooked as a researcher. To rectify this oversight, a secondary form was sent home for the parents and participants, to correctly identify the cultural background and birthplace of both parents. This meant profiles of each participant could then be correctly created to accurately convey who took part in the focus groups. These assumptions around bicultural acknowledgment do not take away from the importance of researching this unique audience; if anything, it highlights how recognition or not in early life can impact individual acknowledgment of the cultural binary, and how situations can dictate that acknowledgment. This idea illustrates the complexity of identity recognition and acknowledgment, especially when that identity is informed by two spaces, knowledges and expectations.

For the focus groups, participants had to meet the bicultural audience criteria (see Literature Review, 9-10). However, what was not measured was the level of

[30] This approach to identity (only acknowledging one half/part of one's cultural heritage as "required") is also reflected in 2013 Quickstats about culture and identity (2014) where participants "…who identified as New Zealander (86.0 percent of 56,751 people) did not identify with another ethnic group as well." (17). This reveals that only acknowledging part of one's identity may not be limited to the age group presented in this thesis, but could be a wider practice. Therefore, being a part of the bicultural is dependent on the individual's acknowledgment of their cultural binary. This further reinforces my decision to refer to this audience as "bicultural" and not "biracial".

exposure each participant had to their secondary culture, or the relationship status of the parents of each participant. It is the assumption that they have a relationship with each of their parents, and therefore an immediate connection to their secondary culture. While conducting the focus groups, it was established that several participants (Bella, Nigel, and Oscar) came from families where the parents are no longer together. While it does complicate their relationship to their secondary culture, their experiences remain relevant to the focus groups, and to this thesis. As a bicultural person, I come from a family where both of my parents have remarried. This complicates my bicultural identity, but it by no means removes me as a member of the bicultural audience. What it does effect is the frequency of exposure and access to secondary cultural knowledge, which is important to recognize as an influential factor on participants and the wider bicultural audience. Bella, who is half Israeli, stated that she did not live with her father, so she did not know his viewing habits as well as that of her mother, whom she did live with. Children from single parent homes have a more complex relationship with their cultural binary, because the source of cultural knowledge – one of the parents – may live outside of the family home. This means that minute habitual behaviours with cultural undertones (cuisine that is prepared for family meals, etiquette around meal times, family activities) will be missed. This alternative family dynamic complicates what cultural knowledge participants can gain, while simultaneously elevating the chances of future miscommunicated cultural expectations, and the potential for negative experiences affiliated with the secondary culture.

One more assumption that has been made is that all participants have or have had positive, regular engagement with their secondary culture. That is, they know at least the very basic details of the culture of their parent/s who have immigrated from the non-western country. This is an important assumption to acknowledge, because it dictates the reading of participant responses. When discussing who they relate to and what characters and narratives they feel represent their experiences, the assumption is that they are aware of the cultural binary they embody; it is this cultural binary that informs who they subsequently relate to.

2.4 Focus Group participants

I had hoped to replicate the classroom and social environment participants were most familiar with. This would result in a more comfortable atmosphere, hopefully improving participation. However, due to time constraints (focus groups were carried out several weeks later than initially intended due to schedule miscommunications),

issues with students returning their permission forms on time, and unforeseen restrictions of working with the stipulated age group, only one mixed focus group and one all-female focus group was carried out. Once the mixed group was completed, it became clear that if an all-male focus group was to be carried out, in order to maximize engagement and data results, a bicultural male moderator would be better suited to take the group. Due to time and resource restrictions, it was not possible for this third focus group to take place. Future research may choose to begin by carrying out an all-male focus group and compare their findings to what is presented in this thesis[31].

The initial findings saw that the all-female group was more responsive to the questions regarding their viewing processes and what they related to in cinema (see appendix for focus group question outline). Each of the female participants from focus group A were relatively respectful and supportive of each other's answers, and were able to sound board off each other's answers, creating dialogue and new directions in relation to their viewing behaviours. There was more depth and cohesion to the reasons for the viewing choices they made. The participants in focus group A were able to make connections between their identities and their viewing choices, and further make connections of behalf of their parents, and with films they preferred to watch.

[31] As facilitator in the first two focus groups, it became clear that I needed to provide different ways of framing the same questions in order to make sure everyone understood what was being asked of them. Had a third, all-male group been conducted, I feel it would have resulted in very little data, because there would have been several obstacles the male participants would have had to overcome initially to even begin to articulate what films they watched and why:

- Understanding what each of the questions is asking
- Becoming comfortable enough to contribute with a young, female facilitator
- Becoming comfortable enough to contribute in a group environment
- Making the connection between identity, biculturalness and cinematic viewing choices

It was clear from the mixed group, that conducting an all-male focus group would require further resources, time and willing participants; all of which were in short supply. Chiu and Knight (2011) recognize the importance of who conducts qualitative research in relation to minority groups, and the steps that need to be taken in order to avoid stereotyping, generalizations and essentialism. Their research influenced the choices I made regarding the way I conducted the two focus groups, as well as the decision not to conduct the third, all-male one:

> Researchers' racial identity matters, in that it determines what they see and do not see, as well as their ability to analyse data and disseminate knowledge adequately (Ahmed, 1993; Standfield, 1994). The lack of self-awareness of racial identity has led often to Eurocentric views of research methods imposed in cross-cultural settings. (100)

Focus group B had a more difficult time discussing what films they watched and why, with several participants not contributing to the conversation at all. Initially, the intention was for each group to be no larger than eight participants (as encouraged by Krueger and Casey (2000) for a balanced group and successful engagement). An excess amount of permission forms being handed out – due to some unreliability with High School students – led to an excess of participants present for focus group B. While focus group A had seven participants, focus group B had ten, with a wider variety of ages, which made for a more unengaged and reluctant group. The conversation was more disjointed in focus group B, with the conversation frequently falling to several of the more senior and outspoken members of the group: Oscar, Renee and occasionally Kelsey and Nigel. Even when quieter participants like Hannah and Ingrid would have a response, and Oscar or Renee would continue the discussion around that particular film they were talking about, this did not result in discussion like that in group A.

There are several potential reasons for this lack of cohesion within the group. The size of the group definitely impacted on participants choosing to respond rather than being called on, and the size may have changed the dynamic from being casual and relaxed to a more formal atmosphere. One of the participants, Oscar, is also in an authority position being deputy Head Boy, which may have also influenced how students responded to questions. Finally, by combining young men and women ranging in age from 13-18 years old, as a researcher I may have overlooked the standard dynamic of High School hierarchy among the two genders and different year groups. As earlier stated, I chose this school because it was a coeducational school. Going into this study, I wondered whether this would affect the contributions made by both the male and female participants, or whether this would be a set up that they were used to. Post focus groups, I believe that this did affect the answers of the participants, as well as the direction of the conversation. The depth of discussion did not reach the level that it did with focus group A. The appendices provide the pseudonyms of each focus group participant, age, gender and ethnicity for focus group A; the same information is provided for focus group B in figure two.

Each of these students were chosen based on their bicultural identity. The hope was to create as diverse a group as possible, in order provide conclusions and analysis

of answers that came from more than one minority. As a result, across both groups nine different nationalities were represented[32]:

- Samoa (4)[33]
- Tonga (2)
- Fiji (1)
- Cook Islands (2)
- Tokelau (1)
- Lebanon (1)
- Peru (1)
- Israel (1)
- Philippines (1)

I chose not to focus on any one minority group, due to the fact that I wanted to provide my own snap shot of the new, growing multicultural generation of NZ:

> Children were more ethnically diverse than their adult counterparts, with 18 percent of children identifying with more than one ethnic group, compared with 6 percent of adults. The percentages of children who identified with NZ's major ethnic groups were: European (75 percent), Māori 24 percent), Pacific Peoples (11 percent) and Asian (7 percent). Although there was greater ethnic diversity among our children, they were less likely to have been overseas than adults (9 percent compared to 23 percent). (Fiona Smillie 9 2002)

These statistics indicate the changes that continue to take place within the NZ population, and therefore the increasing number of diverse young people that are growing up (in some cases unaware) as part of the bicultural audience; this further reinforces the importance of this study. The range of cultures and cultural binaries is

[32] For more information on participants, refer to Appendix D (98-99)

[33] According to the 2013 Census, it is acknowledged that "The Samoan ethnic group remained the largest Pacific group in 2013, at 48.7 percent of the pacific peoples population (144,138 people)" (15), which is reflected here in the focus groups.

growing, potentially faster than was previously thought. These changes have the potential to be overlooked due to the complicated nature of identifying oneself, in differing contexts.

As previously stated, ethnicity and cultural affiliation are not fixed or guaranteed, so measuring or attempting to define such a fluid audience is not possible in the conventional, quantitative sense. What is possible, is to provide a platform for the bicultural audience to become visible, and for their cinematic experiences and processes to be taken into account. Further, my aim is for the bicultural audience to be recognized as one that "…not only receives [a film's] meaning, but also becomes an active contributor to that meaning" (Jones 7). This thesis works to provide a space for the bicultural audience, and to create new narratives about national audiences, as well as audience research. Functioning as a platform for future audience research to develop and build on, this study opens pushes the boundaries of notions of audience criteria and recognizes the bicultural experience and perception as not only relevant, but also important to understanding the wider national audience in NZ.

2.5 Bicultural Identity Acknowledgment

Research conducted by Phinney (1990, 1996) looked specifically at minority ethnic identity compared to white identity development, and how, through exposure and education about their own and other ethnicities, students can improve their comprehension of their own identity, and of those around them. Phinney acknowledges the many obstacles that accompany the discussion around minority group identities, including avoiding generalisations, which I have taken into account here. Rather, the aim is to convey trends experienced by the bicultural participants, making connections between each participant's bicultural status and their subsequent viewing processes. Phinney describes how "individuals vary in the degree to which they identify with their ascribed ethnic group and the extent to which their group identity is salient and significant to them" (143-144), as illustrated in my focus group findings. Some participants acknowledged the culturally-specific etiquette and how it influenced film viewing in the home with their parents, while others did not feel – or did not express – that there was any cultural influence wrought on their own behaviours by their family's viewing habits.

Phinney discusses the issues around qualitative research of ethnic minorities (147-148) but fails to acknowledge the very core of the problem, which is the fluidity of

the acknowledgement of ethnic and cultural identity of the individual, as stated earlier. In relation to Phinney's research, ethnic identity acknowledgement may be very straight forward, because she discusses minority groups, not bicultural people. There is almost an essentialism that makes up the back bone of the research conducted, and therefore informs the conclusions that she comes to. Phinney does not discuss the outcomes of engaging with more than one culture, and when this is referred to in the article (501), it is assumed that this binary has the potential to be problematic. Little was known at the time of Phinney's publication about the structure and development of bicultural demographics, or people belonging to more than one cultural/ethnic group. The complexity of charting such a group within society cannot be either avoided or easily calculated, but it should at all times be acknowledged as a limitation of such research. There are three phases to bicultural identity: exposure and accessibility, positive or negative experiences, and acknowledgment of this cultural binary, internally and/or with others. The assumption is that exposure is a guaranteed feature of growing up as a bicultural person, when that is simply not the case. This is illustrated with focus group participants Nigel, Bella and Oscar, whose relationship to their secondary culture is unforeseeably complicated by the simple fact that their parents are no longer together. As a researcher, I did not anticipate this detail, and it is unclear how much this factor alters the development of their bicultural identity, and therefore their nuanced engagement with cinema.

Further, "a specific question that has concerned researchers is the relationship between what people say that they are (ethnic self-identification) and what they actually do (ethnic involvement) or how they feel (ethnic pride)." (Phinney 506). This is also mentioned by Statistics NZ as a factor that should be acknowledged: the purpose of needing to acknowledge one's ethnic background alters the response that is given[34]. Upon further conversation with my family members who are young bicultural people, acknowledging that there is a binary in the first place is dictated by who is asking and why: "…they may be providing ethnicity responses that best reflect how they identify themselves relative to what they understand to be the purpose of the information." (*Understanding and Working with Ethnicity Data* 5). This means that a key factor in recognizing the bicultural audience is if/how the bicultural audience identify themselves

[34] "People in New Zealand, as in other countries, may change the ways in which they identify themselves over time or they may identify themselves differently in different situations." (Understanding and Working with Ethnicity Data 2005 5)

in a given situation, as I, myself found (see appendix D for sign-in sheet participants filled out upon arriving to the focus group sessions).

2.6 Bicultural Identity Structures

In the article "Negotiating Biculturalism: Cultural Frame Switching in Biculturals With Oppositional Versus Compatible Cultural Identities" (Benet Martinez et al 2002), a spectrum is developed to measure a bicultural person's relationship with the two cultures that make up their identity. Evidently, a bicultural person must construct an identity that is both informed by the ideas and expectations of the space that they are born into (NZ), and influenced by the expectations and history of their secondary culture. Having two culturally specific meaning systems necessitates that the bicultural person must embody two different sets of cultural knowledges, which they then use as tools to navigate both cultural spaces (assuming that movement between the two cultural spaces is something they are able to do or have done on a regular basis).

Benet-Martinez et al's article outlines the difference between those bicultural people with a compatible and complementary cultural binary, as opposed to an oppositional and contradictory cultural binary as falling on a spectrum of "*bicultural identity integration* (BII) and propose[s] that differences in BII moderate the cultural frame-switching process." (493). According to Benet-Martinez et al, those who have high BII are able to successfully practice frame-switching, while people with low BII struggle to make the transition for a myriad of reasons (496). This frame-switching is further explained through the four acculturation strategies outlined in the article:

> Assimilation, integration (or biculturalism), marginalisation, and separation. Assimilated and separated individuals identify with only one culture (the mainstream or ethnic culture, respectively), and marginalised individuals identify with neither culture. However, integrated individuals identify with both the mainstream and ethnic cultures. (494)

Therefore, high BII means that the two cultures are compatible, and low BII means that the two cultures are contrasting, and difficult to integrate (496). I do not go into detail here about the relationship each participant has to both their mainstream and

secondary culture[35]. Instead, I allude to the variety of structures of each participant's bicultural identity, based on their responses to the questions that address viewing habits and processes, and their familial dynamics.

It is clear through the answers to some of the questions regarding family viewing habits and relationships that some participants are more engaged with their secondary culture than others. This in turn impacts their self-awareness and who they engage with on screen. What further complicates this affiliation with onscreen narratives and characters, is if the country that the parents of the participants immigrated from does not have a national cinema, or indeed any accessible films produced from within the country. Without texts being produced from these non-western countries, participants are prevented from being able to constructively engage their secondary culture and its representation onscreen, which further necessitates them creating a sophisticated viewing process in order to engage with mainstream cinema.

The different levels of acknowledgment and integration does vary between individuals, from those who view their two cultures as compatible, to those who view them as highly distinct and oppositional. For many in the bicultural audience, the reality is that they "identify with both cultures, even if not at the same level." (LaFromboise et al 495). This conclusion is an important milestone in the development of the bicultural identity research. Deducing that the relationship to both cultures is not always (or ever) going to be engaged with and embodied equally is something that may allude many in the bicultural audience, for the simple fact that they are likely to have limited engagement with the secondary culture, most of which will be further restricted by its reconfiguration in a NZ context. This lack of acknowledgment can lead to a sense of guilt as stated earlier, which is triggered by the feeling that one is not successfully representing both parts of their identity in a productive, consistent and correct manner. The reality is that the factors that influence when, how and why these aspects are engaged and embodied, are beyond the control of the bicultural person, at least until

[35] This decision was informed by the fact that it would have been too time consuming for all of the participants to acknowledge and articulate the structure of their identities, and the engagement they have with each culture that makes up their individual binary. The goal of the focus groups was to discuss film viewing habits, not dissect each individual bicultural identity. Further, adding questions specifically relating to bicultural status would draw attention to the relationship between culture and each participant's viewing processes, effectively priming participants for my desired responses. These questions would also encourage participants to compare their own bicultural identity structure to that of their peers, which I wanted to avoid.

they are in adulthood. This is worth remembering as bicultural research continues to develop.

Examining film viewing habits is an interesting measure of BII; as discussed later in this chapter, I began with early childhood memories of films, then moved to discuss the habits of their families, specifically their parents before moving onto the viewing habits of participants. It could be argued that a type of frame-switching occurs when a bicultural person views cinema, which influences to varying degrees their negotiated reading of the text[36]. The bicultural person could activate a process that allows part or the entire cultural binary to be put on hold, or muted, much like the black women interviewed by bell hooks[37], in order to become truly immersed into a character or narrative onscreen. This is indeed the case for Catherine who discussed this issue once the focus group had concluded:

> Catherine: I have something you might want to add: Maybe a question about how your race could get in the way of watching a film? Like, for me, I grew up with interracial parents, like my dad's European, my mum's Filipino, so that gets in the way…whenever I watch romance films. So like if the characters are white/white [two white characters romantically involved] I'm like "oh ok", but if there's an interracial couple, I'll get really into it. That's why I love *West Side Story* (Dir. Robert Wise and Jerome Robbins 1961) so much, because it's a Puerto Rican girl, and a white guy.
> Moderator: So you mean it gets in the way as in [you have an active thought process that begins with] "if they're all white, I have to "try and relate" ...
> Catherine: try and relate to this [relationship between characters on screen]

The relationship that Catherine has to these characters demonstrates her ability (or inability) to relate her own experiences to a narrative. The fact that she has one NZ parent and one Filipino parent makes a film like *West Side Story* more relatable, because

[36] "Decoding within the negotiated version contains a mixture of adaptive and oppositional elements…it makes its own ground rules – it operates with exceptions to the rule" (Hall 137). The bicultural audience is an exception to the rule of viewership because they do not belong to any one minority group or the mainstream, national culture completely. Thus, "this negotiated version of the dominant ideology is…shot through with contradictions, these are only on certain occasions brought to full visibility" (137).

[37] In her book "Black Looks" (1992), hooks discusses the process of spectatorship through a black female view: "Every black woman I spoke with who was/is an ardent moviegoer, a lover of the Hollywood film, testified that to experience fully the pleasure of that cinema they had to close down critique, analysis; they had to forget racism. And mostly they did not think about sexism" (120). I expand on this notion of silencing specific aspects of one's positionality in chapter three.

the two characters are of different cultural backgrounds. Catherine's physical appearance, it can be stated, is also similar to that of the main character, Maria. This illustrates that specific biological biculturalness may not in fact be an important part of the process when processing films and engaging with texts (i.e. a Filipino bicultural person watching a film about a Filipino character). Rather, the physical similarity becomes a focal point, and the common ground through which bicultural young people can develop a connection with characters and narratives.

LaFromboise, Coleman and Gerton provide an overview of journal articles, books, technical reports, and dissertations from a "two-dimensional, level-of-analysis perspective and a subject-matter perspective" (395) that looks at the psychological effects of embodying an identity informed by two cultures. The disciplines LaFromboise et al borrow from include education, sociology, psychology and ethnology, and in their article they provide criteria specific to the successful cultural competency of a bicultural individual:

> This behavioural model of culture suggests that in order to be culturally competent, an individual would have to (a) possess a strong personal identity, (b) have knowledge of and facility with the beliefs and values of the culture, (d) communicate clearly in the language of the given cultural group, (e) perform socially sanctioned behaviour, (f) maintain active social relations within the cultural group, and (g) negotiate the institutional structures of that culture. (396)

This criteria – if it was to be applied to the bicultural audience in a NZ context – would exclude a large portion of the bicultural audience. For many, access to all of the knowledge necessary to negotiate that secondary culture is limited, due to the isolated nature of NZ, as well as individual socioeconomic status. To be able to expose their children to the culture that they grew up in, immigrant parents of bicultural people must have the means of getting home in the first place. Active social relations and language may also be limited, depending on whether people from the same country are living in the same vicinity. Language does not exist in a vacuum, so without others to share and

converse with, the language can become dormant in the parent whom originates from that secondary culture and country[38].

I do not agree that the entire criteria provided by LaFromboise et al is necessary to be considered part of the bicultural audience, but it does raise a valid outline of criteria that those who solely belong to either the NZ or secondary culture may believe is relevant in order to be considered a successful part of that cultural group. Both cultural groups have the capacity to exclude – without even recognising how their intentions or actions may be read by the bicultural person – more readily than they are to include bicultural people. Further, a bicultural person might tick the entire list LaFromboise et al has outlined, but the sense of belonging is still not guaranteed. The social aspect of how identity is shaped is not recognized in its complexity in this study. However, LaFromboise et al acknowledges that the length and detail of this criteria is not meant to create a dichotomy, but instead be utilised to view biculturalness "…within a multilevel continuum of social skill and personality development" (396). It is here that LaFromboise et al illustrates an understanding of the bicultural identity structure that is less clinical than that of Benet-Martinez.

LaFromboise et al's five structures can be applied similarly to the bicultural audience, and their ability to accommodate two cultural meaning systems. These include: assimilation, acculturation, alternation, multiculturalism, and fusion. Assimilation is essentially the process of leaving one's cultural group (minority group), its knowledge and social etiquette for another culture (mainstream culture), and to be accepted and perceived by those within that new cultural group as a successfully contributing member. As a result, the individual creates a new cultural identity for themselves, but at the cost of at least part of their original cultural identity. Attempting to leave one culture and replacing it with what is perceived as a more desirable culture (more than likely the mainstream culture of the location that the person is living in) leads to stress and anxiety in the process of transition. Assimilation is not a likely outcome for the bicultural audience, at least not in the traditional sense. A portion will

[38] This is a likely possibility for those bicultural children growing up with one NZ European parent, and one parent from a non-western country. A possible reason for the native language of the non-western parent becoming dormant may be because it is perceived as detrimental to the child's English language development, and therefore the chances of personal and professional success in a westernised, colonial country like New Zealand.

have a NZ European parent, providing links to people and place for some in the bicultural audience, and therefore affording this group a sense of belonging. For the rest of the bicultural audience, who have two parents from non-western countries, the dichotomy between the mainstream and secondary culture is readily recognized, which means they have a stronger distinction between the two cultures, but their knowledge of their secondary culture is likely to have more depth and continuity within the secondary cultural space (a communal location like a church, or the home).

The acculturation model differs from the assimilation model in that it "…implies that the individual, while becoming a competent participant in the majority culture, will always be identified as a member of the minority culture" (397). Smither (1982) refers to the process of acculturation as involuntary; namely that members of the minority group, in order to survive economically must adopt specific cultural etiquettes of the mainstream. This notion is employed to a greater extent by the bicultural audience, who are more aware of the discrepancies between their mainstream and secondary cultures, as well as the racial stereotyping that they are likely to encounter.

What all these models of biculturalism assume is that the secondary culture is acquired at a different point than that of the mainstream culture. This is untrue for the bicultural audience, who are born in NZ to one or both parents who come from non-western countries. Their immediate engagement from birth (assuming that they have access to their secondary culture) is with both cultural meaning systems (subject to familial dynamics and parents' own relationship to their cultural background). For a portion of the bicultural audience, accessibility to both cultures continues to be regulated and frequent, making frame switching between the two cultural spaces a habitual behaviour. Unlike the immigrant parent/s who gain one cultural knowledge (from their homeland) before moving to NZ, the bicultural person's lived experience is infused with a blend of two cultures, requiring them to navigate and contemplate their cultural knowledge as it is required.

The alternation model theorizes that it is possible for a bicultural person to comprehend and engage with two cultures as they are required; assuming "…that it is possible for an individual to have a sense of belonging in two cultures without compromising his or her sense of cultural identity" (399). The outcome of the alternation model suggests "…that individuals who have the ability to effectively alternate their use of culturally appropriate behaviour may well exhibit higher cognitive

functioning and mental health status than people who are monocultural, assimilated or acculturated" (399). This theory is very much aligned with the frame-switching discussed by Bennet-Martinez et al. Departing from the assimilation and acculturation theory, the alternation model does not assume a hierarchy, instead allowing for the individual to "…assign equal status to the two cultures, even if he or she does not value or prefer them equally" (400). An interesting case study that engages the simplicity of the alternation theory was completed by Sodowsky and Carey (1988), which found that first-generation[39] Asian Indians overall were highly capable of speaking and reading in English, but preferred to think in their native language, and preferred Indian food and dress at home, but American food and dress in the wider community (400). This trend among the participants of Sodowsky and Carey's study illustrates a positive engagement with both cultures can be reinforced by behaviours and language that are affiliated with a particular space. For many in the bicultural audience, the home tends to become the site that is transformed into the secondary cultural space.

This may be applied to the viewing processes and practices of the bicultural audience, who may choose to engage with specific cinema when at home, and different cinema when in a mainstream environment. This division may be the result of parents allowing for a certain type of cinema in the home; cultural rules dictating what is appropriate (what the bicultural audience can and cannot watch); or, if there is a national cinema of the immigrant parent/s that is accessible choosing to elevate those films above the rest, for educational purposes as well as personal reflection:

> Fiona: Mum likes to get these Latin American arty films
> Moderator: With subtitles?
> Fiona: Well we speak Spanish at home

Fiona's mother takes an active role in what her children watch, making family movie viewing a time to engage in her native language, but also expose Fiona and her siblings to stories and storytelling that are alternative to that of mainstream Hollywood.

The multicultural model "promotes a pluralistic approach to understanding the relationship between two or more cultures." (401). This means that an individual can maintain his or her original cultural identity while creating a positive "…identity by

[39] The bicultural audience is referred to as "first generation" because they are the first generation of either one or both of their parents to be born in New Zealand.

engaging in complex institutional sharing with the larger political entity comprised of other cultural groups." (401). LaFromboise et al questions whether the multicultural approach can be maintained in a contemporary societal structure, stating instead that a more likely outcome is "…that various groups will intermingle, leading to the evolution of a new culture." (401). This is the fusion model but unlike assimilation or acculturation, there is no cultural hierarchy. Psychological outcomes have pointed to the same as that of the experience of assimilation, and there has been little evidence of successful fusion models carried out.

LaFromboise et al emphasizes the huge impact individual factors have on bicultural identity development, which can be seen in the responses that I received. Age, gender, level of cultural engagement/accessibility, and socioeconomic status all influence the self-awareness of the each participant, and I again acknowledge that the participants are still young and are therefore, individually, at varying stages of their overall identity development: "It is important to remember that individuals, not groups, become biculturally competent. This suggests that each person will proceed in the process of cultural acquisition at his or her own rate." (LaFromboise et al). This conclusion is applicable to the different answers that were provided by participants of different ages

LaFromboise et al lists knowledge, cultural beliefs and values, positive attitudes toward both cultural groups, bicultural efficacy, communication ability, role repertoire, and groundedness as dimensions that a bicultural person would need to engage in order to successfully manage the process of living in two cultures (403). In theory, this would be a productive approach to the successful engagement of a well-rounded bicultural identity. However, factors outside the control of bicultural people and their parents/caregivers make this type of successful engagement unlikely; at least for every single aspect mentioned. Rather, like all human processes and developments, developing a bicultural identity is an ongoing process, where other influences such as time of life, socioeconomic factors, familial relationships and education can shift either or both cultures into a positive or negative light. What LaFromboise et al does recognize is that:

> …it is inappropriate to assume that this sociological reality produces a predictable negative psychological outcome. Research suggests that individuals living in two cultures may find the experience to be more beneficial than living

> a monocultural life-style. The key to psychological well-being may well be the ability to develop and maintain competence in both cultures. (402)

In their article "The Malleability of Bicultural Identity Integration (BII)" (2013), Cheng and Lee conducted two separate experiments that compared low BII and high BII, what influences BII, and whether it is changeable. BII has been shown to play an important role in how biculturals manage, negotiate, or switch between different cultures. By engaging the group of second generation Asian-American women, they asked for 10 examples of positive bicultural experiences, and 10 negative examples of bicultural experiences:

> …BII is malleable based on biculturals' recall of past bicultural experiences; BII was higher (or their two cultural identities were viewed as more compatible) when recalling positive bicultural experiences than negative bicultural experiences. However, the recall of positive or negative experiences irrelevant to biculturalism did not change BII. (1238).

This is useful when looking at how biculturals view themselves in cinema: the only available representations of them or their secondary culture influences how they feel about their culture, and therefore where they sit on the scale of low BII to high. Those in the bicultural audience who have yet to encounter a representation of themselves in cinema further complicates this notion. Cinematic and media representations are powerful, and it is intriguing to see how the biculturals view themselves within media and cinema; mediums that do not yet feature bicultural narratives. Such a limited source of representation can lead to biculturals moving beyond character affiliation, instead drawing parallels between their own experiences and the narrative. This connection between cinematic narrative and personal experience may be obvious (a Samoan male engaging with the narrative of *Three Wise Cousins* (Dir. Stallone Vaiagoga-Ioasa 2016)), or the connection may be more deep-seated, engaging analogously or metaphorically (a bicultural person engaging with the *Harry Potter* series as an analogy for the binary of cultural space and knowledge).

In "An upside to bicultural identity conflict: Resisting groupthink in cultural ingroups" (2010), Mok and Morris created an experiment where they tested to see whether people with low BII would conform to the group consensus regarding a test looking at 3D shapes. In an older study, they concluded that participants with low BII

resisted assimilating to cultural norms so that the alternative culture would not be left behind. Those with High BII did conform and did not feel any guilt in their assimilation. The ethnicity of the group (be it mainstream or secondary culture) did not matter in the low BII decision to resist, nor their need for agreeableness or closure.

This study could help to justify the film choices of the subjects in the focus groups, who go against the group consensus of their peers or families and have cinematic tastes that are dissimilar to both these groups. In Focus Group A, Emily discussed how she enjoyed watching Korean cinema on her own, and that this preference was not shared with most of her family, only with her sister. Danica stated that a movie she had recently seen was a documentary on Frida Kahlo, which she watched by herself. In their individual choices, both participants departed from the genres of films they watched socially. It may also be interesting to see what exactly influences their choices, if not the Mok and Morris factors. What will also be worth further research is how the students feel about the filmic choices of their peers and family.

The next section examines the responses of participants which are broken down into several sections: parental viewing habits from the perspective of their children, habitual behaviours of family around film viewing, independent film viewing choices, and participant engagment with representation. Breaking these sections down allows for the development of connections through the different cultural binaries that the participants are exposed to, their viewing habits and choices. The cultural background and exposure to cinema preferred by participants' parents is a major influence on early exposure, establishing familial habitual viewing behaviours. Cultural knowledge influences what parents deem acceptable for their children to be exposed to, and how cinema can be utilised as an educational tool. What has surfaced from these focus groups is how different cultural knowledges and etiquettes are manifested when the bicultural audience chooses what films they engage with, and how parents themselves utilise cinema in different ways.

2.7 Family Film Viewing Habits

To begin, I look at early engagment with cinema, and what participants felt their parents preferred when watching films. This is followed by a discussion on the film viewing habits of the family as a whole, e.g. Fiona and her mother, who is Peruvian, using cinema to engage her native language and expose her children to cultural

storytelling within Latin American cinema, as well as the way films were used by Renee's parents to reiterate religious beliefs. Finally, I discuss how the participants themselves engage with cinema, and what representations they affiliate their own experiences with. It is important to move through these featured relationships to cinema chronologially, in order to understand how the familial dynamic can structure cultural norms in the family home, as well as considerations such as parents who come from countries that do not have their own national cinema, or have limited accessibility to cinema itself.

Generally participants stated that they were introduced to films by their friends and family, and would re-watch particular films repeatedly. For everyone in both focus groups, it was usually an older sibling, parent or authority figure who chose the films that were watched, usually in the family home. However, one participant, Fiona, stated that the family viewing decision was a shared responsiblity within the family:

> Moderator: Who would be in charge of putting the movie on or choosing the movie (when you were young)?
> Fiona: Well, my family goes randomly taking turns of the week (mother, father, Fiona and younger sister)
> Moderator: Choosing one (a movie)
> Fiona: yep
> Fiona: everyone agrees with it (the choice)

This was not a common theme among the two focus groups, with many families adopting a hierarchy of film choosing, beginning with the parents, and moving down to the oldest child, and so on. This meant that the ability to choose what film was being presented was based on one's position in the family. These dynamics in turn influenced and shaped the viewing habits of the bicultural audience, from what they are exposed to in early life, what genres become habitual family viewing, and also what is unspokenly not to be viewed in the family home, or at least not with the entire family present. The choices of parents regarding what their children watch, and what control they give their children in terms of freedom, varies from participant to participant. What is clear, is how some parents (specifically those who have a national cinema where they originated) utilise cinema to reengage with their cultural/national identity, and to engage their children with that original cultural identity.

For several of the female participants, like Emily and Anna, watching films is not an activity they engage in outside of the family home. When they did watch movies with their friends, they would only do so if invited to their friend's house:

> Moderator: Emily what about you (What types of movies do you watch with your friends?)
> Emily: I don't have friends over
> Moderator: You don't have friends over? You don't go to the movies with your friends?
> Emily: Nope
> Moderator: It's only family that you watch (movies with)
> *Emily nods*
> Anna: I'm not allowed friends over either, I don't go to movies with friends, just family
> Moderator: Has it always been like that?
> *Anna and Emily nod*
> Moderator: What about when friends invite you over?
> Emily: At a certain time, we have to come back.
> Anna (laughs): Yeah.
> Moderator: What kinds of movies do you watch when you go to your friend's house?
> Emily: I've never been to their (my friend's) house. (laughs)

This acknowledgment of the authority around who the participants were allowed to watch films with was an interesting development. Both Anna and Emily are from a Pacific Island background, where family is a top priority for everyone in the community, alongside religion. Unlike their peers, Anna and Emily's parents were unlikely to have had frequent access to films, let alone enough access to make going to the movies a regular occurance. When speaking to my father, who was born in Western Samoa and immigrated to NZ in 1975, he stated that the first time he went to the cinema was when he was 12, and he went alone after he had spent the day with his mother selling produce at the local market. This was a chance event, because money was scarce. My Step Mother, who immigrated to NZ in the early 1980s, stated that she did not go to the cinema until she was 19. It seems that for immigrant parents, especially from the Pacific Islands, watching films and going to the cinema was not something that was a priority in childhood, nor something that would be seen as an activity to partake in on the weekend with friends. Not only was money better spent elsewhere, but for

some families, days revolved around school hours, plantation farming and maintanence, and fishing. Film is seen as a luxury for many growing up in the Pacific Islands, especially for the parents of participants. Cinema was not as accessible, and therefore a less frequent activity than it would be in NZ. This attitude towards cinema may very well influence the choices of Emily and Anna's parents, perhaps even subconcsciously, in not allowing them to go and watch films with their friends. Of course, this is one possible reason for a portion of the bicultural audience. Further, this was not a common theme across the focus groups; most considered watching films as a social event that can be enjoyed with friends. There is no assumption that Anna and Emily's parents decision to let their children only watch films at home or only with family has been detrimental in any way, partly because both participants do not know any different, but also because, like eating a meal, attending religious events or celebrating birthdays, watching films has merely become a family-orientated activity.

Everyone in the group re-watched films as young children, and it became a habitual past time. Renee, (17, Tongan), stated "Because [we got out] DVDs, we could only get so many at a time, so we had to keep rewatching it." Much like the episodic nature of television, it became for Renee (and many others in both focus groups) something they would do with siblings when they would come home from school in order to relax, and as a form of escapism. The next section looks at familial viewing habits that surfaced during focus group A and B. Three themes are covered which encapsulate the diverse ways cinema is utilised in the bicultural family home: Film as education, Film as reflection of cultural structures and boundaries, and film as representation.

As a way of establishing what I meant when I asked about viewing behaviours, I first began asking questions about the viewing habits of the participants' parents, and their viewing habits as a family. Given the participants were all of High School age, I was very aware of the judgment that is normally affiliated with any elected description of personal preference in any area. It was important that the participants establish the normative behaviours and viewing practices in their homes, in order to provide context for their own developing viewership. What was striking was how most participants preferred, or at least actively watched, more films at home than with friends. As stated above, both Anna and Emily did not watch films with friends, and saw it as more of a family activity.

2.7.1 I: Film as Education

In each of the focus groups, I began with questions around early memories of watching movies in the home, before discussing the viewing practices of participants with their friends and family. This approach ensured that participants would affiliate viewing choices to other individuals first, breaking tensions and preconceived ideas around connotations related to who watches what films, and what other participants think as a result.[40] Providing a platform for participants to observe and reflect the viewing habits of others was a tool that would allow for them to begin to think about what they watch, and also differentiate between what they choose to watch and what texts are provided by others. Parental choices regarding cinematic texts varied greatly between participants, but one motive that predominated was parents' ability to utilize film as a tool to teach their children about their culture, but also to reinforce language skills, as well as religious and moral lessons.

Fiona, whose mother immigrated from Peru in 2000, discussed briefly the film choices of her mother:

> Moderator: So that is a way for her to exercise that language?
> Fiona: Yeah
> Moderator: And do you watch them with her?
> Fiona: Well I have to, but I don't like them

Unlike many in both focus groups, Fiona's mother comes from a country – and wider region – where there is an established national cinema, that has a strong history and distinct storytelling and stylistic techniques. Recognising cinema as a means of re-engaging her culture and simultaneously familiarising her children with their native language and heritage, Fiona's mother is utilising cinema as an educational tool. In being exposed to Latin American cinema, Fiona and her siblings are encouraged to activate their language skills and become familiar with their secondary culture and cultural space onscreen. It is clear that Fiona doesn't always enjoy watching these films, but from her response, it can be surmised that watching Latin American films has become a habitual behaviour in the home. Watching these films serves as an important

[40] As part of the ice breaker, I asked participants to introduce each other, and discuss their partner's first film that they remember seeing. This exercise allowed participants to begin the focus group by practicing the process of remembering the films they watched. This personal landmark therefore worked as a mechanism for participants to "…more accurately report events" (Bernard 218).

way for Fiona to engage with unfamiliar texts using her bilingualism, to become familiar with stories that have surfaced from her mother's homeland, and establishes a better understanding of how her mother's upbringing and cultural influences shaped her as a person.

LaFromboise et al states that being able to communicate with clarity and confidence using the language of the secondary culture contributes to cultural competence (396). This is a feature that is reinforced when Fiona and her siblings watch these films chosen by her mother. In order to understand the narrative and engage with the text, Fiona must listen intently, picking up jargon and social cues within the use of dialogue. Fiona stated earlier that Spanish is the language spoken in the home, so these family film viewings are complimentary to her Mother's efforts to maintain a high level of bilingual competency. Further, Fiona's mother's use of cinema as an educational form of modality can be understood as providing a level of validation to those biculturals who are fortunate to have a national cinema – other than the NZ national cinema – to refer to when searching for familiar representations.

For Renee and Mason from focus group B, cinema provides a moral and religious education. Coming from cultural backgrounds that reinforce a strong sense of community centred around religion – Renee is of Tongan descent, while Mason is half Samoan, half NZ European – it is not uncommon for cinema to be utilised as a medium to reinforce bible teachings:

> Moderator: What kinds of movies do your parents like to watch?
> Mason: Religious
> Renee: Aw, *Passion of the Christ*? Did you have to watch that every year?
> Moderator: Do you watch that at home [regularly]?
> Renee: Well no, but when we were growing up we would watch it yearly

What is interesting about this discussion is not so much that they are watching religious films (as previously mentioned, the school Mason and Renee attend is Catholic), but that they are engaging with films about religion that are more literal in their realisations of biblical stories. When discussing this film, there was no sense of trauma, or any misunderstanding around the purpose of watching the film. Much like the Latin American films Fiona's mother would make her and her siblings watch, Renee

saw the annual family viewing of *Passion of the Christ* (Dir. Mel Gibson 2004) as an activity that accompanied (I assume) the Easter holiday.

Though the question asked what their parents liked to watch, Renee's answer illustrates how the filmic choices of the parents easily spill into what their children also watch. What parents watch is almost always what their children watch, especially in households where there are limitations on what content is available (minimal internet access, few devices/televisions in the household, restrictions on consumption put in place by parents). With the vastly changing capabilities of mobile phones and other devices, it becomes easier for young children and young adults to have more autonomy over what they consume. However, in the case of participants across both groups, with few exceptions, what their parents watched, they watched as well. While some may deem *Passion of the Christ* too violent and inappropriate for young viewers, Renee's parents have taken the position that the film's moral and religious themes made it appropriate for their children to watch. It could be argued that Renee's parents felt compelled to allow a film to reinforce what they felt they weren't able to articulate. The fact that *Passion of the Christ* is a film of religious importance in the sphere of mainstream cinema reaffirms that it perhaps provides a type of validation to the religiously informed upbringing that Renee's parents chose for her and her siblings.

2.7.2 II: Film as reflective of Cultural structures and boundaries

In terms of film choices and shaping their children's viewing habits, parents' film choices also reflect cultural structures and boundaries around what is appropriate. Cultural norms and parameters are reflected in what parents allow their children to view, and what films or genres they – consciously or unconsciously – allow to become habitual watching in the home. When discussing family and parental viewing habits, we can view these choices through a cultural lens, and unpack how cultural values and etiquette help to shape what parents deem appropriate for their children. For Fiona's mother, film served as a means of engaging her cultural heritage that Fiona has yet to experience first-hand, and provide a platform from which Fiona can ask questions and become informed, even if it is through a mediated text. In this section, I discuss how Renee's and Emily's families, in particular, provide unique examples of how cultural backgrounds inform what films the bicultural audience is exposed to and how these habits can be analysed.

When section B was covered in both focus groups, there was a general consensus that families chose action films, drama and comedies together. These were usually family friendly and therefore "appropriate" for the whole family. Two participants who disrupted the trend were Emily (Focus Group A) and Renee (Focus Group B). Both discussed how Horror films had become habitual family watching, but that there were restrictions and expectations that came with watching such films in the home:

> Moderator: What types of movies do you watch together with your family?
> Emily: We watch Horror
> Moderator: Like you and your parents?
> Emily: The whole family, and action stuff

Here, Emily states that it is not just her and her parents who watch Horror films, but the whole family. Horror is not a film genre that is affiliated with family viewing; most horror films are rated R16, with excessive violence, trauma and murder portrayed onscreen. Later on in the focus group, Emily stated that her favourite Horror film was *Silent Hill* (Dir. Christopher Gans 2006), which she watched by herself. When asked whether she watched Horror film just with family or by herself, Emily stated that she did both. This assertion acknowledges that family viewing habits have become a private viewing habit as well. Emily's preference for Horror is a result of her exposure with her family to the Horror genre. Emily later refers back to the Horror genre:

> Moderator: What do you look out for when you are choosing a movie?
> Emily: Um…the whole family, whenever we go to the DVD store, we always go to the Horror side [section of the DVD Rental Store].
> Moderator: And it doesn't matter as long as it's from that genre that you guys will pick [from]?
> Emily: Yeah and there's like no rude scenes
> Moderator: Is that hard to find?
> Emily: yeah…We watch with my brother so we can't watch that stuff

Emily acknowledges the difficulty of finding the right type of Horror film that her entire family can watch together, and also the unspoken rules of what is and is not acceptable to see onscreen. The conclusions that can be drawn from Emily's response is that violent narratives are seen by her parents are acceptable family viewing, but without any sexually explicit scenes, or nudity. This makes for an intriguing cross-

cultural contrast regarding what is and is not appropriate for young viewers, as well as family viewing. What a NZ European may deem completely unacceptable (violence onscreen, Horror films) is seen as acceptable viewing by Emily's parents, while even an allusion to a love or intimate scene or partial body exposure, is seen as unacceptable. I delve into this more later, but first it is important to compare Emily's response to that of Renee from focus group B:

> Moderator: What movies do you watch together with your family?
> Renee: Horror
> Moderator: Yeah, like *Paranormal Activity* (Dir. Oren Peli 2007)
> Renee: Like *The Exorcist* (Dir. William Friedkin 1973). Like those kinds of movies. You could say kind of religious
> Moderator: What did you think of that kind of movie?
> Renee: Really interesting, with like religious stuff, and what they do in those kind of cases, and how they handle it [the evil].

A standard face-value analysis of these family viewing habits would perpetuate racial stereotypes, concluding that violent narratives reflect the culture of violence that underpins the stereotypes affiliated with some minority groups – particularly Pacific Island and Māori. These viewing habits could be seen as illustrating the habitual nature of abuse, and how through watching movies featuring violent narratives, these behaviours become normalised. I do not take this direction with my analysis. It is not accurate to equate viewing habits with domestic abuse behaviours and racialized stereotypes. Further, this approach to analysing these findings completely ignores the relationship that the parents themselves have had to cinema previous to immigrating to NZ, which greatly effects how they choose films: what films mean to them, and the different ways film can be utilized to benefit them and their children. To follow this train of thought would be to apply the hypodermic needle theory (Kirsh 27) to the bicultural audience and their parents; this approach would undermine the participants, their parents, and their relationship to cinema, and make negative assumptions with little empirical evidence.

Instead, Renee's parents have a more specific type of film in mind when Horror films are chosen. Renee acknowledges that religion is an important part of family life, and *The Exorcist* conveys this idea very effectively. The film is encoded with tropes of the Horror genre: extreme examples of violence, paranormal activities, and more often

than not, death and murder. However, it can be argued that what is decoded by the parents of Emily and Renee, is an extreme example of good overcoming an overwhelming evil. The negotiated reading of these parents is that the moral dilemma positively reinforces the belief systems that underpin the meaning making processes of the cultures that they embody and activate in their homeland, i.e. a NZ context. By viewing Horror films as families, these parents are purposefully choosing examples of religion overcoming evil circumstances and obstacle.

While it is unclear what parameters there are around the extent to which violence can be portrayed onscreen for family viewing, what is clear is that intimate or sexual behaviour is not acceptable watching. This conclusion can be read as more of a definitive cultural difference in approach to what type of intimate behaviour is appropriate to be seen onscreen. For each culture represented across the focus groups, there are different social etiquettes and expectations around what is tolerated in terms of intimate behaviour, what is spoken about, and what is acknowledged. Rather than grapple with the many representations of romantic narratives in mainstream cinema, decisions made by these parents could be seen as actively moving away from romance-obsessed Hollywood, instead focusing on universal narratives of good overcoming evil. The way that this struggle is presented to the audience, especially in B-grade films, is a relatively straightforward formula. Horror provides an explicit example of a good/evil paradigm.

There is also a suspension of reality at the forefront of Horror films. There is little reason for the bicultural audience to believe that these experiences are functioning as a representation of reality, or that they will encounter anything that they see over the course of the film. This approach to cinema illustrates that the parents of Renee and Emily see cinema as a way of reinforcing important religious and moral expectations, but through metaphorical narratives that are often extreme, allowing for some entertainment value.

When discussing the sex scenes and nudity that usually accompanies the violence in Horror films, Renee acknowledged the difficulty of unspoken but implied parameters that are respected around choosing films:

> Moderator: Is there any ones (films) that you don't watch? If you were going to choose a horror film, what would stop you from choosing [a certain one]?

> Renee: Like my family or me? They (parents) let us have, like, a specific amount of freedom, but we know that there's limits, that we, that's inappropriate for us to watch, and it's quite awkward watching some things with our siblings.

Renee is very aware of what is culturally appropriate, and what her role is within the family. As a gatekeeper, Renee takes responsibility for choosing films that uphold the boundaries that her parents have set. This acknowledgment is key for the bicultural audience; what takes place is a shift in judgment, taking into account what films are acceptable for the family to watch together. Older siblings, especially, become the in-between person e.g. expanding on the cinematic knowledge that their parents already have, and learning to match what their parents deem as appropriate to what is alluded to through Western-designed trailers and DVD covers. Having been exposed to cinema from a young age in a western country like NZ, young bicultural people like Renee and Emily have an alternative comprehension of films and their cultural and social meanings, to that of their parents. They know how to 'read' such marketing materials and, simultaneously, balance the two cultural expectations and parameters: their own entertainment and that of their parents.

2.7.3 III: Film as Representation

The bicultural audience has a point of difference when they engage with film texts. This is their ability to go through a process that allows them to relate not only to white characters onscreen, but to also feel that their experiences are, partly, represented by other minorities. One example that most readily articulates this affiliation is when Anna (year 9) discussed a recent trip to the cinema with her aunty:

> Moderator: What movies have you seen that you feel you can most relate to?
> Anna: *Hidden Figures*
> Moderator: Who did you watch that with?
> Anna: I think I watched that with my Aunty
> Moderator: Did you go to the movies to watch it
> Anna: Yes
> Moderator: And what [did you relate to]
> Anna: Just like, you know how they didn't really accept the coloured people and …I guess that kind of related, people not accepting me, of how I look and stuff.

Moderator: And do you think that that's something that you've experienced, or that you're probably going to experience in the future?
Anna: Yeah

Here, Anna explicitly relates to a narrative that centres around the true story of a group of African American female mathematicians who worked at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) in the 1960s, during the space race. The film follows these women as they deal with racial prejudice, as well as relationship issues and professional indiscretions. Anna acknowledges that she sees herself represented in the narratives of these women, and she also recognizes the racialized issues that they faced is something that she is likely to encounter in her lifetime. This affiliation with the African American representation onscreen is not uncommon. Across the two focus groups, Anna's response was an isolated one. However, when she did bring up the film, the other girls in focus group A nodded and responded in agreement to Anna's suggestion of *Hidden Figures* being a film she related to.

What Anna has recognized in this film is the obstacles that the characters had to overcome, and that these obstacles could potentially take place in her life. Watching *Hidden Figures* becomes a learning and participatory process, whereby instead of engaging with white characters, Anna becomes an active participant in creating a negotiated reading, which reconfigures her cultural binary in order to become immersed in an alternative minority group's experience. This transition is only necessary because the bicultural audience – already so vast in terms of diversity of cultural binary, cultural exposure and mobility between the two cultural spaces – is not yet represented onscreen as a unique experience. When the bicultural national experience is represented, with a main theme of the narrative being the navigation between cultural space and expectation, as well as bicultural identity development – as conveyed in films like *Three Wise Cousins* (Dir. Stallone Vaiaoga-Ioasa 2016), *My Wedding and Other Secrets* (Dir. Rosanne Liang 2011) and *Matariki* (Dir. Michael Bennet 2010) – such texts are not widely available, especially to the demographic of High School students. It is in these areas that limited knowledge of cinema can hinder engagement with narratives that attempt to represent the bicultural experience.

Further, by going with her aunty, a female authority figure, Anna's parents made the conscious decision to allow her to go to the cinema to watch a film about a female minority group that is a true story, elevating a narrative that is so rarely heard in

mainstream cinema. In exposing Anna to such a narrative, her parents have illustrated the forethought of providing Anna with an example of women who resemble her in appearance and somewhat in experience, and who overcame obstacles of racism and misogyny to become successful in their field and achieve what they set out to do. This process of negotiated reading (through the connections made based on common ground shared by the characters and a bicultural audience member) illustrates in its most basic form what is entailed when bicultural individuals engage with mainstream cinema.

On the other hand, Emily and her relationship to *Moana* (Dir. Ron Clements and Jon Musker 2016) is complex; she does not relate to Moana as a character, or even her journey as a mediated version of her parents as Greta does, but to the relationship Moana has with Maui. Emily comments that Moana's relationship with Maui is one she can relate to more than that of male/female relationships in other mainstream films:

> Moderator: What movies have you seen that you feel you can relate most to?
> Emily: *Moana*
> Moderator: *Moana*?
> Emily: Yeah
> Moderator: What do you relate to (in *Moana*?) I suppose that's another woman of colour who is at the sort of, forefront. What is it about Moana that you relate to?
> Emily: Aw how, she travels with Maui
> Moderator: And how do you relate to that?
> Emily: Aw you know how there's other themes and stuff, how they like, usually go with boyfriends and stuff, and you know, Maui's just like, the cousin of Moana, yeah. That's like me.

In the film, protagonist Moana (Auli'i Cravalho) decides to leave the island where her parents and other villagers live, in an attempt to rectify the ills that were created by her ancestor, Maui (Dwayne Johnson), which will allow her people to thrive once more. What is different in the story of Moana is that her character development and the main relationships that are fostered in the film are not romantic. The end result is not to become romantically involved, which has been the goal and outcome of so many Disney and mainstream narratives.

Emily has recognized that the reason she connects with this particular film, is not the cultural relevance to her own background, but the elevated importance of familial relationships, and how family can be the driving force behind decisions and outcomes. From her response, it can be inferred Emily feels more comfortable connecting with this type of relationship and character development. It could be argued that in recent years, The Walt Disney Company has moved away from the banal romantic narrative of the princess and the suitor, which has been a consistent trope since the production company's conception in 1923. Further, *Moana* provides a unique adventure narrative, which illustrates the effects of individualistic approaches on a communal level (Maui seeking his own prestige at the expense of others, and initially at his own peril)[41]. This type of narrative reinforces the societal structures that are not performed in the wider Western environment, but instead by communities familiar to Emily's parents. In turn, it can be assumed that this structure is recreated in the home, which is why Emily can relate so readily to the emphasis of family ties, intergenerational connections and the importance of social and cultural conscience that emanate through *Moana.*

Most importantly for Emily, is that there is a strong, healthy relationship between a male and female character that is not romantic. Maui is the ancestor of Moana, and provides knowledge to Moana that she needs in order to complete her quest; however, he is also the reason that she has to complete the quest in the first place. The narrative arch of the dynamic between Moana and Maui is similar to that of other recent Disney films; *Frozen* (Dir. Chris Buck and Jennifer Lee 2013) – Ana and Elsa, *Brave* (Dir. Brenda Chapman and Mark Andrews 2012) - Merida and her Mother. There is tension and then co-operation, resulting in success, but for Maui and Moana there is never a consideration regarding romance. This movement away from the romantic narrative conveys an important idea to young bicultural women – and the wider audience – that success and achievement are not tightly intertwined with romantic relationships, but begin within the family. For Moana, Maui was an important factor in achieving her goal, because it was he who held the knowledge that was needed to overcome the obstacle of the encroaching degradation of the island. A positive outcome

[41] It should be acknowledged that Maui is present in the mythological histories, including that of Māori. It could be argued that Moana is an attempt to collate multiple cultural groups within the South Pacific, homogenizing their history and uniquely individual national identities. However, due to word limits, this aspect of the textual analysis is not elaborated in chapter three. However, it is an important argument that should be revisited.

for Maui and Moana was that they were able to work together, with Maui rectifying the mistakes he had made in the past, and Moana overcoming overwhelming odds to secure peace and prosperity for the future of her people.

In hindsight, it would have been interesting to discuss the films that have been made here in NZ that acknowledge the cultural binary and the struggles that come with it.[42] These films provide interesting examples of two lead characters, born to Chinese and Samoan parents, who struggle with the cultural binary that dictates their decisions and the expectations they must live up to. These films are available, but it would have been useful to see whether any of the participants had a) heard of either of these films or b) had watched either of them. Both films convey unique – if slightly sugar-coated – examples of being raised by immigrant parents in a NZ context. These narratives illustrate some of the complex contradictions that having two sets of cultural knowledges can create for a young bicultural person. However, this study being a participant-led discussion, neither of these films were acknowledged or discussed, which alludes to some of the issues around the circulation of NZ films, as well as the attitude that Kiwis have when they see themselves on screen.[43]

2.8 Conclusion

In this chapter, I defined more specifically what is means to be in the bicultural audience in a NZ context, the parameters and assumptions that were considered in creating the focus groups, and overall outcomes from the focus group A and B. The focus group participants were introduced; in sum there were nine minority groups represented. A comparison between the two groups saw that the all-female group gave more answers, which were more in-depth in their reasoning and also more varied. The mixed group was more reserved and was not able to contribute at the same level[44].

[42] as previously mentioned, films such as *My Wedding and Other Secrets* (Dir. Rosanne Liang) and *Three Wise Cousins* (Dir. Stallone Vaiaoga-Ioasa 2016).

[43] See Davinia Thornley's "Talking film, talking identity: New Zealand expatriates reflect on national film" (2009 99-117) which discusses how Kiwis living in the UK perceive representations of New Zealand film.

[44] I attributed this outcome to the fact that there was a wider age range in focus group B, the male/female dynamic having a far larger impact on everyone's responses, as well as the fact that one of the participants was the deputy head boy of the High school that participants attended.

Reviews of psychological literature provided further discussion around Bicultural identity acknowledgment and Bicultural Identity Integration (BII) structures. Bicultural identity acknowledgement recognized the assumptions and issues around when and how the bicultural audience recognized their binary i.e. whether it was standard practice, or as the situation required. Bicultural identity structures referred to the different influential factors that shaped the development of a young person's relationship to their two cultures, and how the transition into adulthood illustrates the fluidity of the structure and balance. Further, I discuss the psychological side effects of an imbalance in engagement and preference between the two cultures, such as guilt and inferiority in either or both cultural spaces.

I discussed family viewing habits and representation; themes that came out of both focus groups (with varying degrees of success). Using the responses from Renee, Fiona, Emily and Anna, I examined how and why parents chose films like *Passion of the Christ* and *The Exorcist* for viewing, using the themes of film as education, and film as a reflection of cultural structures and boundaries. These themes provided a platform for responses that were vastly different in reasoning, genre choice, and availability of content (as tied to the homeland of parents).

Finally, I discussed participant responses in relation to onscreen representation. Anna acknowledged her affiliation with female African American characters in *Hidden Figures*, stating how their experiences mirrored issues that she may face in her life as a young female of colour in a Western environment. Emily related to mainstream cinema in a different but no less important, way. Through the narrative of *Moana*, Emily was able to recognize how rare it was to see non-romantic relationships take centre stage in the main narrative of a high-budget film. It was this representation of strong familial ties that Emily engaged with more, as it was the type of relationship she shared within her own family, as well as Moana's motive: her journey was her family, and the long-term wellbeing of her family and her people.

The themes that have come through in the focus groups provide an important insight into not only who the bicultural audience relate to and how their different identity structures influence their viewing habits, but also what their parents deem relevant and appropriate for family viewing. Vast differences between parental film choices indicated that there are some parents who see film as an educational tool that can aid in teaching their children about their secondary culture, while others utilised

film as a form of moral and religious education (it should be noted that these parents come from countries where there is no established national cinema, so it is not possible for cinema to be used for cultural education in the same way). The concluding subsections of this chapter provide an important starting point for the next chapter, which examines viewing practices in depth, providing an articulation of the specific processes utilized by the bicultural audience when watching mainstream cinema. In discussing this process, we can begin to understand the complexity undergirding the relationship between NZ's bicultural audience and the films they consume.

Chapter 3
Spectatorship

3.1 Introduction

In this final chapter, I analyse responses from participants that directly relate to the viewing processes they employ when watching specific film examples raised during the discussion[45]. While I gave examples of my own engagement with cinema as an illustration of bicultural spectatorship, all participants were encouraged to provide their own examples, and elaborate as clearly as they could, the method that allowed them to connect with the narrative and/or characters they saw onscreen. I utilise W.E.B. Du Bois's concept of "double consciousness" as a way of understanding what Patricia Hill Collins refers to as "flexible solidarity" (2017). While Collins applies flexible solidarity to the wider African American experience, particularly the systemic racism that is embedded in every sector of American society, I apply it to my participants' bicultural experience with cinema. In the final section of this chapter, I make comparisons between the audience experiences of my participants with those discussed in the work of bell hooks (1990, 1992).

This chapter is divided into sections according to the different responses of participants:

- Connection through personal experience and cultural comprehension Pt I
- Connection through personal experience and cultural comprehension Pt II
- Affiliation and education through familial transnational experience
- Cinema as an aid in understanding one's cultural binary
- Alternative Cinema: Studio Ghibli
- Flexible solidarity and the Bicultural Audience: Alternative Cinema
- The "Leap" of bicultural spectatorship

[45] Due to the limited data that resulted from focus group B, this chapter refers solely to the responses and discussions that took place in focus group A. Further discussion regarding the reasons for this can be found in chapter one (37).

Specific responses from participants lead my analysis of viewing processes. By aligning these responses with pre-existing literature about other minority audiences, the bicultural audience materialises in a productive, contemporary context. As Coleman illustrates, in this methodological approach "…texts do not construct the audience" (14). Rather, the texts that surfaced in each of the focus groups provide insight into what types of films participants feel they readily relate to. For participants, these films shed light on familial relationships analogously through character dynamics that they affiliate with their own, as well as their parents' identity and diasporic experiences.

Transnational studies also play an important part in developing each participant's understanding of their secondary culture, and the features of their home life that differ from a "traditional" kiwi home that features two NZ-born European parents. Particularly in the discussion provided by Greta, parental transnational experiences are realised and elevated through cinematic narrative, shedding light on features of her upbringing that she had previously overlooked. Khagram and Levitt refer to transnational studies as "...an optic or [a] gaze that begins with a world without borders, empirically examin[ing] the boundaries and borders that emerge at particular historical moments, and explor[ing] their relationship to unbounded areas and processes" (5). Transnational studies can be percieved as a narrative mode of research which, for the purpose of this study, is embedded in the experiences of biculturals and their individual interactions.

By breaking down this chapter into separate analyses of specific responses, I avoid overgeneralisations and acknowledge participants' diverse experiences with different aspects of cinematic narratives, as well as stylistic observations developed through the group discussion. As stated by Coleman:

> What is to be gained by reductionism, the marking of boundaries, or solidifying the arena of identity study? I fear that to diagnose and prescribe will not bring a cure (I don't think one is needed); rather, to do so will simply anesthetize and diminish the very vibrancy of identity itself. (5)

Instead, I aim to shed light on the bicultural audience to make this group of diverse people visible, in order to bring to the forefront more questions, more curiosity, and more acknowledgment of biculturalness in a NZ context.

The goal of this chapter is to provide examples of different embodiments of bicultural viewing processes in a NZ context, by attempting to break down that viewing process into stages. This break down illustrates the very stark differences in cinematic decoding and negotiated readings, while also being indicative of the way bicultural people from similar backgrounds (one parent who immigrated from one of the Pacific Islands, and one NZ European parent, for example) relate to specific narratives. What is interesting in the following responses is the specific filmic examples that participants chose to discuss, and the particular details they were able to isolate and articulate as aspects of the narrative that they felt represented their positionality as in-between two cultural identities. In a similar study, Jaqueline Bobo eloquently describes the importance and relevance of new spectatorships through her discussion of black female viewership:

> Not only is the difference in reception noteworthy but Black women's responses confront and challenge a prevalent method of media audience analysis which insists that viewers of mainstream works have no control or influence over a cultural product. Recent developments in media audience analysis demonstrates that there is a complex process of negotiation whereby specific members of a culture construct meaning from a mainstream text that is different from meanings others would produce. (309)

Bobo understands how different perspectives inform the reading and meaning-making of previously overlooked audience members. For the bicultural audience, this study provides a space to discuss films they relate to and from which they draw new interpretations. Further, it offers to bicultural people living in NZ the opportunity to introspectively review the truly unique nature of their perceptions and engagements with cinema[46].

The seven sections of bicultural reception covered in this chapter, as articulated by the participants, provide a strong experiential foundation. We can begin to

[46] The age and gender of the participants played a significant role in their level of participation, as well as their already established social relationships. These factors had a stronger impact on discussion that I had anticipated as the focus group convener, particularly focus group B that featured both male and female participants. These intersectional features are taken into consideration in my analysis, and are elements that can be improved in any future research on bicultural audience reception. As a result of limited participation and responses on behalf of the participants in focus group B, all of the responses featured in this chapter are from discussions that took place during focus group A.

understand how embodying a bicultural identity influences the cinematic viewing process and, in turn, how bicultural young people feel their experiences are personified in filmic narratives. These responses and my analysis reflect the complex, multi-layered relationship that young biculturals have to their position in society as NZ-born "others". This is a position that continues to be contested – particularly in relation to the otherness to which Māori are subjected. It is very much a position of difference that bicultural people feel in relation to each of their cultures, as well as their status as a "Kiwi". It is clear that this feeling of isolation, difference, or being outside of social and/or cultural circles is influenced by the geodemographic location of the bicultural person/group in question. Given that Dunedin is made up of a largely white population, these feelings of otherness appear more amplified for the participants in the group than for those living in larger, more culturally diverse cities like Auckland or Wellington.

I have stressed throughout this thesis that identity, for the bicultural audience, cannot be settled. The bicultural relationship to history, landscape and environment is more complex due to the nature of their parents' movement. Unlike that of African Americans, the transnational movement of these immigrant parents was, it can be assumed, an informed decision seeking a better quality of life and more opportunities for their children. These factors of transnational movement, combined with aspects of identity such as gender and age, inform the responses of participants. The following pages reflect the choices, thoughts, narrative comprehension and impact of diverse narratives that encourage the bicultural participants to reflect on their experiences, that of their parents, and, to an extent, their unique positions within contemporary NZ as young Kiwis. They simultaneously enter and exit spaces, and adhere to cultural expectations like cultural chameleons (Mok and Morris 2010). This is a capability so embedded that it is barely registered, both in terms of self-awareness as well as viewership.

3.2 Connection through personal experience and cultural comprehension Pt I

I start with Anna, who suggested *Hidden Figures* (2016) as exemplary of how she views herself and her experiences (see page 60). Through this reading, the affiliation of the bicultural audience through onscreen representation of other minorities can be realised. Further, we can begin to evaluate how mainstream films about minority groups, however infrequent, can benefit the bicultural audience, and provide a familiar face, space, struggle and story.

Anna registered the obstacles of racial prejudice and discrimination that the lead characters Katherine Johnson (Taraji P. Henson), Dorothy Vaughan (Octavia Spencer) and Mary Jackson (Janelle Monáe) were subject to as something that she was likely to encounter in her lifetime. It was interesting to see that all the other participants agreed with Anna's explanation of her relationship to the text. It is important to note that *Hidden Figures* is based on a true story. It centres around real African American women who worked at NASA during the 'Space Race', a time of historical and political upheaval. There are multiple African American women at the centre of this film and, perhaps most importantly, the narrative reflects women of colour leading the way in a scientific field dominated by white men. Obviously, there is an abundance of positive outcomes from seeing oneself onscreen, but it is clear from Anna's affiliation with *Hidden Figures* and the chorus of agreement from the other participants, that even being exposed to a story about a female from a different minority group, from a different era, can be productive.

In her description of why she related to *Hidden Figures,* Anna was clear about her affiliation with the African American female characters, and the obstacles they faced throughout the film. Anna has two parents who immigrated from Western Samoa prior to her birth, so her immediate engagement with the characters was visual; the physical similarities that she shared with the women onscreen played a significant part in her ability to make connections between the characters' experiences and her own. It should be reinforced that Anna did seem to be aware of the differences between her experiences as a NZ-born Samoan young woman and the characters, but the racial prejudice, as well as the obstacles of working in an environment that caters to white men is something that she recognized.

Anna is aware of her position as a young Samoan woman in a colonial space. Her affiliation with the true story of these women who were able to contribute to their chosen field in spite of the oppression and barriers they encountered, demonstrates Anna's awareness of the additional pressure she will encounter as she moves forward in her own life. This narrative also conveys her potential to break barriers; those constructed stereotypes and norms that Anna recognizes will not factor into the choices and careers of her white classmates.

Coleman asks, "What does the audience bring to this media encounter as they struggle with definitions and constructions of what is real?" (13); Anna provides a

negotiated reading that employs a gaze that looks for physical similarity (women of colour). From this reading, she constructs a meaning-making process that chooses elements that loosely match her experience. Anna illustrates one way the bicultural audience can move through film narratives and pinpoint aspects of similarity, allowing for escapism and a sense of fulfilment[47]. The obstacles that Anna will encounter as a bicultural person are not represented on screen, so Anna relies on already established cinematic definitions of Otherness and othered peoples in a mainstream narrative to relay aspects of her experience, providing insight regarding coping skills that she may need when encountering obstacles in her life.

When Anna states that *Hidden Figures* illustrates racial prejudice (and connects this to her own experiences as a young woman of colour) she readily acknowledges problems caused by being physically different, but through her engagement with this text, she is able to affiliate her otherness with the positive thematic overtones of the film: strength, empowerment and perseverance. Anna's response to this film reinforces the importance of diversity among mainstream cinematic narratives and storytellers. Seeing women of colour as central characters provides historical examples of minorities overcoming oppression and hardship, and achieve success. From this discussion, it seems that films based on true stories are easier for participants to relate to, and provide blueprints for how real people have overcome real obstacles.

Further, what is perhaps most important about mainstream films like this one is that they convey a powerful message that real women of colour are capable, intelligent and are agents of change – both in their own lives and in moving away from wider stereotypes. Currently, there are no films featuring a young Samoan female lead character, either in the NZ national cinema cannon, or in mainstream cinema. Therefore, it is natural for Anna – in searching for herself onscreen – to seek a likeness in film, in whatever form she feels most relates to her experiences.

3.3 Connection through personal experience and cultural comprehension Pt II

A second example came from Emily. She extracted the character relationship between Moana and Maui in the Disney film *Moana* as an aspect of the narrative that she related to, therefore entering a "…participatory relationship [with the film] …

[47] Much like that of the women bell hooks speaks to in her chapter which I discuss later in the chapter.

whereby the construction of social meaning takes place around symbolic forms and other representations of the social world" (Coleman 12). In the film, as Emily recognizes, Maui is an ancestral relative of Moana. As she moves to create change, Moana seeks the guidance of Maui, who over the course of the film becomes her travel companion. As with the majority of Disney family films, there are many ups and downs throughout Maui and Moana's relationship, but what is distinct about this narrative is that there is no romantic development between the two main characters.

While there have been other popular family films without romantic relationships[48], Emily has recognized that the distinct familial relationship between Maui and Moana directly correlates with her relationships with her immediate and wider family. Specifically, noting that most films feature women characters who "usually go with boyfriends", Emily recognizes the heteronormative narratives and relationships recycled by Hollywood. From her response, it can be assumed that these romantic plotlines do not ring as true for Emily as the dynamic between Maui and Moana. Emily articulates, from her bicultural perspective how this onscreen relationship is different from other films; this is also the element of the narrative she feels metaphorically conveys her personal experiences and relationships most effectively and accurately.

In pinpointing such a specific aspect of *Moana,* Emily is decoding the film, and stripping it back so that it reveals parallels to her own experiences and her own relationships. Emily sees the bond she shares with her male family members reflected in Maui and Moana's relationship; a bond that is elevated in importance due to the transnational movement undertaken by her parents, but also a pillar of the foundational dynamics of Tongan culture. While Emily's specific family structure was not discussed, it can be assumed that--having two parents who have immigrated from Tonga--there is a strong Polynesian influence that dictates each member display loyalty and prioritise family. Seeing these dynamics on screen reemphasizes the importance of these familial male/female relationships, and provides a form of validation that is rarely provided to minorities and their unique cultural structures. This validation can be further applied to the nature of the narrative of *Moana* and its mythical roots.

[48] Examples include *Finding Nemo* (Dir. Andrew Stanton, Lee Unkrich 2003) and *Brave* (Dir. Brenda Chapman, Mark Andrews 2012)

One further aspect of Emily's reading that can be analysed is how *Moana* displays the positive outcome of a communal approach to a problem or obstacle. In the film, Moana sets out to break the curse that is encroaching on the island where her family and village live, and seeks the help of her ancestor, Maui, to assist in overcoming the curse and allowing her people to live harmoniously. Although initially ill-fitted, Moana and Maui work together to overcome obstacles, which results in Moana not only saving her people, but also rectifying Maui's own previous wrongdoing. In ensuring the future of her people, Moana helped Maui to resolve the past, in turn creating a new narrative built upon traditional myths and mythical figures.

For Emily, *Moana* illustrates the positive outcomes of family working together, and the results of a communal approach to obstacles. This narrative can be perceived as progressive, in having a woman of colour in the lead, who embodies all the characteristics of the traditional male 'saviour'. In many ways, *Moana* disregards the traditional Disney princess romance narrative. Had Moana not set out to save her people, Maui would not have been able to rectify his past indiscretion. If Maui had not helped Moana in her quest, she would have been unable to save her family. While Maui aided her journey, Moana embodied a lot of her own strength that in many ways matched her male counterpart. The balance between male/female characters in this film illustrates a contemporary representation of familial gender roles[49], particularly as a narrative rooted in Pacific Island culture[50]. The partnership displayed in the dynamic between Maui and Moana reinforces the potential and importance of strong familial relationships. *Moana* conveys thematically that anything can be overcome when family ties are strong.

At the same time, it can also be argued that a film like *Moana* is detrimental to the minorities it represents, through its generalization of multiple Polynesian ethnic groups and borrowed mythical storyline. The popular wisdom is that mainstream film producers limit creative input to maximise audience numbers. But by relinquishing specificity in favour of an arguably shallow representation of a minority, *Moana*

[49] This could also be applied to Niki Caro's film adaptation of Witi Ihimaera's novel *Whale Rider* (2003).

[50] There is a Samoan legend that centres around a Goddess of War, Nafanua, who was known for her strength and agility in warfare (*Nafanua The Guardian* 2015). The lack of mainstream knowledge or accessibility to such narratives means bicultural people may be unaware of stories that disrupt traditional patriarchal values. This reinforces the novelty of *Moana*, but ignores the wider legacy of the strong female presence in Pacific Island oral tradition.

homogenizes Polynesian cultures to make its narrative – and therefore the cultural groups it represents – palatable to a wider audience.

Apart from making assumptions about the audience it is marketed to, on many levels *Moana* provides different and in some ways contradictory readings and responses to Coleman's question, "What does it mean for cultural politics when the narratives of experience, history, language and identity are passed through media's filters of technology, representation, formulas, stereotypes, and storytelling, and are commodified in the process?" (20). While I recognize the shortcomings of *Moana* representationally as well as culturally, what has surfaced in focus group A are positive engagements, and an applied process of narrative extraction that is highly subjective, but which has provided positive overlaps between personal experience and narrative plot. One more example, as provided by Greta, is the way *Moana* provided a cinematic reimagining of the transnational movements of her parents, which I discuss next.

3.4 Affiliation and education through familial transnational experience

> Moderator: What types of movies best represents your experiences in your life?
> Greta: Well it doesn't really represent my experience, but like in *Moana* how she has to choose, like she could stay on the island or leave, and leaving would help her family like, long term, whereas staying would help them short term. I feel like my dad and other people in my family could relate to that. When they were back home in the Islands, they got to choose whether they could come to NZ and work and send money back home, to help them out, or they could stay and help there, but it wouldn't be as effective?... I feel like that's a connection.

In her response, Greta likens the narrative journey that Moana goes through to the experiences of her parents--specifically the trials and tribulations they encountered when they moved from their home in the Pacific Islands to NZ. In the film, Moana makes the decision to travel on her boat beyond the barrier that her father told her never to cross. Moana does this because she understands that in order to ensure a better quality of life for her family, she must overcome her own fears of open sea travel. Greta recognizes the same decision-making process in *Moana* as that engaged by her parents and family members when they decided to move to NZ. From Greta's perspective, Moana's decision to travel abroad stems from the same logic as the decision of her parents to move from their homeland to NZ.

By aligning Moana's journey with her parents' transnational movements, Greta gains a better comprehension, not just of the risk factors that her parents took into account when they decided to move to NZ, but also the familiarity they were giving up in favour of future opportunity for themselves and their future generations. Greta recognizes, through *Moana,* the very complicated nature of her family's decision to move to a country they quite possibly had never been to before. Willingly entering an unknown space creates its own anxieties and fears; Greta was able to better conceive of these for having been exposed to a cinematic narrative featuring characters and cultural signifiers she saw as representative of her family members who made such a journey.

Coleman's query earlier in this chapter regarding the cultural commodification illustrated in the filtration through media channels, is answered through Greta's contribution to the focus group discussion. Through *Moana,* Greta perceived her parents' movements as metaphorically realised in Moana's decisions and challenges. For Greta, *Moana* provides a type of validation that reinforces the transnational narrative so often denied both to those who made the journey, and importantly, to their bicultural children who are then born in NZ.

As suggested with Coleman's statement earlier, one positive outcome of a film set in the South Pacific – however filtered and diluted for commercial consumption – is that young women like Emily and Greta are resonating with aspects that they recognize as part of their own bicultural narrative. A Disney "princess" who provides an animated embodiment of the bicultural audience and whose own story is driven by the need to overcome obstacles that are impacting her family and wider community, is not to be underestimated. It could also be argued that the cultural dilution of the narrative – using both the native language and English, for example – makes it not only more palatable to a wider audience, but that this marriage of American/Polynesian storytelling conveys a positive collaboration of two cultures. While cultural authenticity of narrative is not of central importance in *Moana,* it does provide an important example from which other mainstream films about minority groups can learn.

Emily's and Greta's response also illustrates hooks' sentiment that there is power in looking (115) but there is more power in being recognized for your looking, for your gaze. Everybody looks, but not everyone is graced with the recognition of wielding a gaze. This lack of recognition is what drives this research: for the bicultural audience to be recognized as a group of people who are born in unique circumstances,

and who hold a gaze informed by multiple bodies of knowledge, histories and, in many cases, contradictions. The process employed to engage with cinema is shaped by these factors, and in turn inspires a new gaze. I do not have the resources or the space to delve into the multi-layered bicultural gaze, but what I do intend to do with this thesis is bring attention to the bicultural audience, and raise awareness – for those within the bicultural audience as well as the wider audience reception field – that these processes and unique engagements with cinematic texts are important, they are insightful, and they are the future. To embody two identity structures creates a middle ground that simply did not exist on such a wide, diverse scale thirty years ago. Tracking these developments in NZ audiences means tracking the changes in our own uniqueness as a small nation in the South Pacific.

It is difficult for bicultural young people, like those in my focus groups, to empathise with a narrative like that of their parents' immigration. This disjointed connection to the transnational narrative is largely influenced by whether each bicultural person has entered the space, and the experiences of culture and lifestyle that their parent/s left behind. Before travelling to Samoa at age thirteen, I found it very difficult to conceive of the space that my father was raised in; it seemed imaginary, distant, and other-worldly. Though my father would talk of his village and all the various rituals, rules and etiquettes that came with communal living, it was not until I experienced these features of Fa'a Samoa[51] myself, that I was able to appreciate the sacrifices and vision of my father when he left behind everything that he knew. Though it is unclear whether Greta has travelled back to the Cook Islands, in a small way, *Moana* provides clarification for Greta of the movements and motives of her parents and family members prior to her birth.

Greta extracts from *Moana* a representation of an experience that she herself, did not experience. However, what Greta is referencing in her viewership is the experience of her parent/s, which has shaped her cultural identity, experiences, and engagement with her environment, as well as the opportunities she is provided here in NZ. These

[51] Fa'a Samoa, or "the Samoan way" refers to the moral core of what it means to be Samoan, and how to "lead their lives with by celebrating and embracing traditional values, their culture and environment. It is an integral part of Samoan life, evident in the time-honoured traditions, warm hospitality, as well as the cultural practices and customs of the Samoan people. Fa'a Samoa has three key structural elements to it – the *matai* (chiefs), *aiga* (extended family), and the church." (*Fa'a Samoa – Samoan Culture* 2018).

"…interpretations are the result of constructions, not the result of inherent, fixed messages" (Coleman 13), and although *Moana* is a mainstream narrative meant for mass consumption, Greta's and Emily's interpretations of the film are immediately reflective of their search for themselves and their parents onscreen. In gaining a better understanding of her parents through this narrative, Greta develops an understanding of the complex and unique circumstances that have shaped the structure of her bicultural identity. This important revelation, sparked by engagement with cinematic representation, informs Greta's comprehension of her status as a young, bicultural woman living in NZ. She recognizes her upbringing and identity development was informed – in some ways complicated, but ultimately enriched – by her parents' decision to move to NZ.

Across the two focus groups, Greta's discussion around her developing comprehension of her parents' immigration, thanks in part to the film *Moana*, is among the most profound and insightful readings of a text that I encountered. It speaks volumes about the complexity of each bicultural audience member's relationship to their cultural binary, how they perceive themselves and their circumstances, and the knowledge and access they have to their secondary culture. Speaking specifically about those in the focus groups who are of Pacific Island descent, like myself, although the homelands of our parents are geographically close to NZ, the differences between NZ culture and Pacifica cultures are very distinct, which contributes to introspective comparisons between the two.

3.5 Cinema as an aid in understanding one's cultural binary

There are many differences between the binary of cultures, ways of living, and values. For this reason, it could be argued that bicultural young people struggle to understand the rationale behind the decisions made by their immigrant parents. Not having a direct connection to the environment that shaped their parents leaves the bicultural person without a compass with which to navigate and understand the two cultural spaces they must negotiate. The bicultural audience has no location to reference motives behind parental decisions, and have been raised in a country where their narrative and history is not openly recognized or celebrated. A film like *Moana* provides a platform of mainstream acknowledgement. Based on Greta's and Emily's responses, this acknowledgement has immeasurable positive outcomes and educational value, as well as providing a sense of cultural validation.

Perceiving their experiences and those of their parents on screen in a mainstream film provides a platform to engage what Du Bois calls "…a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others… One ever feels his two-ness …" (217-218). Seeing the narrative of a minority group in a mainstream film elevates their story, and also makes the minority that is being represented visible to those outside of it. It becomes an educational platform and message for those who may never have experienced or had to engagement with these minorities that are represented on screen. For the bicultural audience, our two-ness, or our in-between-ness, is a foot in both worlds, toes touching rich soil but not quite leaving an imprint. We are forever comparing our kiwi-ness to our otherness as well as our secondary culture, and the secondary cultures of others. The bicultural stream-of-conscious is plagued with doubt for this audience: is my experience unique enough to voice, or be recognized as an autonomous audience? Is it possible to "belong" to two different spaces, two different worlds? This is particularly the case when the bicultural audience are located and raised in a different place from where their heritage is tied. The space where their history lies is a distant landscape, quite different from that of the location they are brought up in. It is difficult to articulate this multi-faceted, interwoven consciousness that deviates from the norm and does not adhere to previous audience scholarship, or established identity politics and theory. Our experience is reminiscent of African American audience reception, but we do not suffer the same trauma on such a large, intergenerational scale. The transnational status upheld by our parents is, overall, embodied willingly, with the intention of pursuing a higher quality of life and opportunity for themselves and their offspring. Therefore, the bicultural audience is dislocated from their ancestral homelands to the detriment of first-hand knowledge, but towards the development of a better-quality life.

When DuBois speaks of "…two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one…body" (218), he recognizes the walking contradiction of being African American in the context in which he was writing. However, this sentiment around embodying two "warring ideals" is also relevant to the bicultural experience, and it is represented – for Emily and Greta – in Moana's plight to save her family. Moana represents a new generation of young women who are bound by tradition and cultural expectation, but who are capable of harnessing this knowledge to create productive outcomes. They can also educate their families and wider community about how this unique insight can benefit their lives. Instead of perceiving the bicultural

identity as something to be contained within an established category, texts like *Moana* present an alternative, where cultural values and etiquette can benefit a young woman's forward thinking, while aiding in her journey to find a solution to the issues facing her and her family.

Du Bois goes on to acknowledge that he does not hope to Afrikanize America or Whiten Africa, but instead to "make it possible for a [woman or] man to be both" (218). I take this notion further, pushing for a change in perception regarding the employment of two cultures in one identity and one cinematic spectatorship: not only is it possible to be informed by two cultures, but the fluid nature of the level, depth and frequency of engagement is ever evolving, an ebb and flow of different knowledges. To understand the binary in this sense relieves the bicultural individual from the pressure of establishing a personal cultural hierarchy, as well as justifying it to a society/community that generally cannot relate of bicultural perception, let alone an identity that is informed by more than one culture. It becomes clear through these responses that the gaze is not only a source of power, but also resistance, as recognized by hooks in her analysis of black female spectatorship (1992). Bicultural viewership becomes a sight of agency, where the audience can perceive a narrative through the application of two cultural knowledges. Understanding this unique application, and – at times – the muting of aspects of each cultural knowledge for the sake of narrative pleasure, is the central preoccupation at the heart of this thesis.

By pinpointing the relationship between Maui and Moana, Emily makes a connection between the characters' dynamics and her own familial relationships. Seeing how familial cooperation is highlighted and put at the forefront of a Disney narrative provides positive reinforcement for Emily, validating the relationships she has in her life, as well as providing insight for the wider audience about what is it like to have multiple strong relationships outside of immediate family. This was acknowledged earlier in the focus group, when Anna and Emily discussed how they do not watch films with friends, but with family. In the weekends and after school, it became clear that quality time was spent with the immediate family, as well as cousins, Aunties and Uncles. This emphasis on familial bonds is illustrated in *Moana,* and was a major feature that attracted Emily. Emily's ability to recognize the aspect of the film that she related to, and why, illustrates one example of the complex process of engagement that the bicultural audience utilise when viewing mainstream films.

In relating the journey Moana takes to that of her familial transnational movements, Greta gained a greater understanding of these experiences through the more palatable visualisation of that transition. The metaphorical nature of Greta's reading means that she can strip back the polished story of *Moana* to find a representation of her parents' experience, one that she was previously unable to envision on her own. The complicated nature of a transition like Greta's parents' immigration to NZ, becomes legitimised through a platform like film (as illustrated in her contribution). Greta has gained some comprehension of her parents motives, moral dilemmas, and the difficult process of leaving behind all that is familiar for potential opportunities.

In the next section, I discuss an alternative cinema mentioned in the focus group by Catherine and Danica, specifically how Studio Ghibli provided a new form of storytelling that they felt was relatable, as well as more applicable, to their experiences.

3.6 Alternative Cinemas: Studio Ghibli

When discussing films that they felt best represented their experiences, participants provided a myriad of responses. Among these responses was one from Catherine and Danica, who stated an alternative cinema was most relevant to their experiences:

> Moderator: What movies or type of movie best represents you experiences in your life?
> Catherine: Probably the majority of movies by Studio Ghibli
> Danica: I like them; I love *Spirited Away*
> Catherine: And all of the Studio Ghibli films have like, a teenager girl lead, so like, I relate to them a lot
> Moderator: Do you feel that living in NZ with a different cultural background, you sometimes have to take a leap when you're watching a movie?
> Catherine and Danica (together): Yeah[52]

Here, Danica and Catherine recognize that in Studio Ghibli films such as *Spirited Away* (Dir. Hayao Miyazaki 2001), they are able to find a representation of a minority female lead that they can relate to and engage with easily. Studio Ghibli is a Japanese animation film studio, created by Miyazaki, director Isao Takahata and producer Toshio Suzuki in 1985, best known for its anime feature films. In the above

[52] This quote is shortened for clarity

discussion, Catherine (of Filipino descent) moves beyond simple engagement with Studio Ghibli films for its aesthetics and alternative context to mainstream Hollywood film, recognising that the aspect that she is most drawn to is the strong female lead.

Studio Ghibli and its many collaborators have a tradition of making films featuring a strong female lead[53]. Catherine recognizes the strong female non-white lead is a feature of these films that she is both drawn to and feels is relevant to her experiences. A non-mainstream film company, Studio Ghibli provide a platform for perspectives that would not take centre stage in Hollywood[54]. Danica (of Lebanese descent) and Catherine felt Studio Ghibli provided a wider variety of accessible texts that made the process of relatability easier and less of a "leap". In these narratives, Danica and Catherine can see themselves. These teenage female characters are non-white, from alternative backgrounds, and their stories are portrayed outside of the Hollywood model; all features of the films that clearly appeal to the bicultural audience. Studio Ghibli is a great example of how the bicultural audience – when they have access – are drawn to alternative cinemas; particularly, Asian cinema.

3.7 Flexible Solidarity and the Bicultural Audience: Alternative Cinema

As mentioned in Chapter two, Emily acknowledged that she liked to watch Korean cinema, stating that she liked the "themes". When she was young, she was also introduced to Filipino cinema. This suggests that bicultural audiences may be attracted to alternative cinemas in general, as a result of lack of minority representation in mainstream cinema.

While other participants were engaging with the national cinema of their parents, Emily represents the portion of bicultural audience that seeks representation elsewhere[55]. Emily's cinematic experiences and preference for Korean cinema, as well

[53] Film examples include *Castle in the Sky* (Dir. Hayao Miyazaki 1986), *My Neighbour Totoro* (Dir. Hayao Miyazaki 1988), *Only Yesterday* (Dir. Isao Takahata 1991), *Whisper of the Heart* (Dir. Yoshifumi Kondō and Hayao Miyazaki 1995), *Spirited Away* (Dir. Hayao Miyazaki 2001), *The Cat Returns* (Dir. Hiroyuki Morita and Reiko Yoshida 2002), *Howl's Moving Castle* (Dir. Hayao Miyazaki 2004), *When Marnie Was There* (Dir. Hiromasa Yonebayashi 2014)

[54] *Kiki's Delivery Service* (Dir. Hayao Miyazaki 1989) features Kiki, a 13-year-old witch, who Catherine and Danica indicated that they related to.

[55] This attraction to alternative cinemas is, in part, due to the fact that they do not necessarily have access to their parent's national cinema, or it simply does not exist.

as that of Danica and Catherine with Studio Ghibli, illustrates what Patricia Hill Collins recognizes as "flexible solidarity" (2017). Here, the bicultural audience – in this case, Emily, Danica and Catherine – are flexible in their solidarity with onscreen minority representations. Like Anna, they identify aspects of the characters and narrative that they relate to, which allows them to more readily engage in spectatorship that is slightly different from the process of watching mainstream films. In many respects, when acquainted with a specific cinema, this unique process of flexible solidarity takes on a familiar tone and can become second nature in terms of the bicultural person's viewership.

3.8 The "Leap" of Bicultural Spectatorship

The "leap" that I mentioned earlier refers to the way the bicultural audience must mute a portion of their identity, of their perspective, in order to receive cinematic pleasure and fulfilment. An example of this leap can be seen in Catherine's earlier comment regarding *West Side Story* (41). Perceiving this obstacle of marginalised spectatorship from a bicultural point of view, Catherine discusses how her cultural binary "gets in the way" of her engagement with romantic films. The first relationship she was exposed to was an interracial one – that of her mother and father – but this is not a frequent storyline. This results in Catherine feeling that she cannot relate to typical romantic narratives as easily as she does with films like *West Side Story*. Further, she describes the way she responds to onscreen interracial couples, which is with positivity and enthusiasm. For Catherine, this process of 're'-representation is a positive negotiated reading, one which has the potential to be applied to varying degrees by others in the bicultural audience.

Of all the participants, Catherine was the only one to take her filmic reading further and interrogate her own viewership over the course of the focus group discussion. Recognising a shortcoming of having a background and identity that is the fusion of two cultures, Catherine cogently acknowledged how she felt being bicultural, to a degree, clouded her enjoyment, or simply made a film more removed from her experiences. Catherine felt that the two main characters in *West Side Story* provided accurate representation not only of her parents, but a metaphorical representation of her own present and future romantic relationships. While the adversity that Tony and Maria encountered is inflated in the narrative (it is, after all, a *Romeo and Juliet* reimagining), their relationship mirrors the obstacles interracial couples can and do encounter. Whether her parents did experience racially motivated prejudice is unclear, but it is

clear that the coming together of two different cultures in a romantic narrative is something Catherine appreciated and was able to relate to. The image portrayed onscreen is not one that correlates with the experiences of the black female spectator. As hooks recognizes,, in her research, there are shortcomings that surface when switching on and off both sides of the bicultural identity as a spectator. Hollywood cinematic narratives ignore the indiscretions minorities are subjected to, conveying an ideology that is far less complicated and multi-layered.

In order to really enjoy and engage in true escapism, hooks' interviewees shut out the aspects of their viewership that was outside of the mainstream experience, or contradicted the narrative and characters that were being portrayed onscreen. Catherine echoes this sentiment, describing how her background makes *West Side Story* more appealing than other mainstream films. This similarity in obstacles and solutions throughout the viewership process indicates that although the bicultural audience are new – and their experiences, identity structures and individual cultural engagement differ from hooks' interviewees – their audience experiences of onscreen exclusion is shared with a minority audience more readily acknowledged in reception research: the black female spectator.

Taking the reception process one step further and describing the full immersion of a black female spectator, hooks discusses the experience of one interviewee in particular: "To experience pleasure, Miss Pauline sitting in the dark must imagine herself transformed, turned into the white woman portrayed on the screen." (121). It can be concluded that the transformation that Miss Pauline goes through as an audience member, is a similar process to the one Catherine alludes to, where she must re-work her identity in order to become that character that she sees onscreen. The aspects of her identity that gets "in the way" must be left at the entrance of the cinema, at the beginning of the film – so to speak – in order to achieve a pleasurable experience. Catherine feels that the part of her identity (her secondary culture) does not align with mainstream cinematic narratives, and so must be left behind. Anna feels her experiences are embodied in the story of the women in *Hidden Figures* because of the prejudice they experienced both in and out of their work environment. Emily finds a correlation between the representation of familial relationships in *Moana* and the dynamic she shares with her family. For Greta, she does not renegotiate her own identity and experiences, but looks for representation of her parents' experiences, which she utilises in her consumption of *Moana.* Catherine, Danica and Emily all relate to alternative

cinemas with ease. These examples illustrate just of a few of the complex processes that participants employed when engaging with mainstream cinema.

3.9 Conclusion

In the statements made by hooks' interviewees and my High School participants, the correlation between marginalised audiences becomes more apparent. The effort it takes to engage with mainstream films illustrates the active process of engagement – whether conscious (as is the case for hooks' Miss Pauline and my Catherine] or subconscious[56] – that a bicultural audience member employs. It is this process that is so integral to the development of the research specifically relating to the bicultural audience, but also so subjective that one particular formula could never encapsulate the identities, experiences and cinematic viewing processes of the bicultural audience within NZ. Hence the need to align such complex viewership with pre-existing qualitative, audience scholarship.

Similarly, participants acknowledging that they never consciously registered their biculturalness or unique spectatorship conveys the limitations of both the age of participants and the lack of recognition in popular media and academia. Evaluating the two focus group responses, we can see that they do not express a process that results in an oppositional reading of the films they consume; rather, they yearn to see themselves, to engage, and to belong onscreen. In this context, these participants do not see themselves, but it does not stop them from enjoying films. Instead, they navigate an alternative route to cinematic pleasure.

For the most part, participants negotiated parts of their identities and experiences, demoting one feature in order to elevate another, so that they can immerse themselves in film. This negotiation meant that while they cannot see their full selves realised onscreen, they accept that one aspect can be engaged and represented. This

[56]A conclusion that is assumed, given the reluctance to answer questions, as well as the response below, which illustrates a general consensus throughout both focus groups:

> Moderator: [What movies have you watched that you feel you can relate to? What about the movie did you relate to?] How did you make that connection? Is it something you've always thought about, or is it a connection that you've made here today?
> Danica: I've never actually thought about things like this

rearrangement of flexible solidarity is exemplary of how these participants individually comprehend and actively engage with cinema, as well as reflecting on how their relationship with (both mainstream and alternative) film is informed by their bicultural identities. Through these discussions, each participant's cultural binary is positively elevated and bought to the forefront in learning and engaging with cinema as a medium.

What does all this say about the way we engage as bicultural people? An ethnographic approach to this research has provided unique insight into the filmic choices of the young bicultural audience in NZ. Further, the responses from participants has shed light on their viewing processes, what aspects they relate to and why. The lack of representation – the lack of acknowledgment – means that we cannot immerse ourselves fully in mainstream cinema, because not only can it engender internal conflict, but activating our entire perspectives would result in further marginalisation because the obstacles, narratives and even characters are often not ones who reflect our identities. This would lead to a very small percentage of films truly speaking to our conscious selves. Rather than further alienate ourselves, it seems that the bicultural audience chooses to engage in a myriad of different films, finding different points of relatability. The films that surfaced were glimpses, a space where the bicultural audience felt they could more readily envelope themselves in story and understand their own experiences of otherness, marginalisation and cultural misinterpretation.

Conclusion

In concluding this thesis, it is important to remember that the motivation behind this research is to create recognition around a burgeoning group of people who continue to contribute new ideas, comprehensions and perspectives to audience reception: the bicultural audience. Putting the bicultural audience under the spotlight highlights the unique position they hold in straddling the binary between the mainstream culture and their individual secondary culture. Grounded in psychological studies, this research investigated the effects and various theoretical structures of the bicultural identity. This encourages us to perceive this binary as an entity that does not adhere to a formula or singular structure but is one which informs all facets of social life and comprehensions. In particular, for the purpose of this thesis, the development of the bicultural identity helps us to break down the processes that are employed in the meaning making method I have termed bicultural spectatorship.

In combining qualitative data from the two focus groups with psychological and film theory studies, I establish a position for bicultural audience reception within film theory. I also provide insight into the use of films in the bicultural home, film choices made by biculturals, and the in-depth negotiation necessary for engagement with particular cinematic texts[57].

Participants were not primed to make the connection between their bicultural status and their viewing choices; this is illustrated in my decision to discuss how and why participants were chosen at the end of each focus group. While I provided a few of my own examples during both focus groups, this was not to encourage similar responses. Rather, it was to stimulate conversation between participants, and create a space for organic thought processes and connections to take place. The psychological studies helped me to unpack the way participants articulate their viewing choices, which at times were cryptic, or were expressed just as much through body language as words.

[57] The structure and phrasing utilised to conduct each of the focus groups meant that priming participants was avoided as much as possible. This also meant that the data that was relevant to my research was limited. I had anticipated this outcome but, in hindsight, I did not anticipate the influence of established age and social structures within each group, and the effect of combining female and male participants on their participation in focus group B. However, it should be recognized that the relevant data collected and analysed in chapter two and three was the result of discussion among participants, who exchanged ideas and compared their filmic preferences.

Further, it was through the words and phrases of W. E. B. DuBois, that this unique viewing process was most effectively communicated.

Chapter two was broken into categories, in order to provide a framework that would contribute to an in-depth analysis of participant responses (in chapter 3). By interrogating previous research on the cultural dichotomy that is centred around understanding the bicultural identity (in its many definitions), I recognized and applied the valid developments that were relevant to participants and their responses in my analysis. However, I also contested some of the shallower, generalised statements made about the bicultural identity, its many structures and impacts.

Through laying the foundation in the form of bicultural identity research, I then built upon this, unpacking participant responses in relation to their experiences with film. These include the way parents and other family members utilised film in the home for education of their own secondary culture and cultural storytelling (as illustrated by Fiona), and the way participants were able to read the repercussions of the decisions they made when it came to family viewing. This heightened awareness illustrated by participants and their parents conveys how minute decisions, such as choosing a film, entail many factors that need to be considered. These include different expectations of what is considered appropriate by parents, as illustrated in Renee's and Emily's discussion around choosing films.

Finally, the aspect of film as representation for participants saw Anna discuss the way she related to the female main characters in *Hidden Figures* through affiliating her own experiences as a young woman of colour, and foreseeing future obstacles that she could potentially encounter in the work force. Meanwhile, Emily discussed how she related to *Moana,* not through physical likeness to the main character, but through the familial relationship between Moana and her ancestor Maui that took centre stage. In viewing the male/female familial relationship as important enough to take centre stage in a Disney film, Emily illustrated how this representation can reinforce not only the dynamic within the family, but the benefits of having parents who construct a home life and reinforce familial values influenced by their homeland.

Comparing these two responses, Anna and Emily illustrated the highly subjective nature of bicultural engagement. They also conveyed very sophisticated strategies of reaching cinematic pleasure using a comfortable level of escapism. The features of the films they watch and relate to are quite different when compared, but

provide insight into the way bicultural audiences use what Patricia Hill Collins refers to as “flexible solidarity”. It is this flexible solidarity that is developed, along with cinematic “double consciousness”, in Chapter three.

Chapter three incorporated participant experiences, as well as participants’ perceptions of their parent/s’ transnational movements to New Zealand prior to their birth. I also analysed the leap some participants made when engaging with both mainstream cinema and alternative cinemas like Studio Ghibli. Among the most insightful responses in this chapter included Greta’s discussion around her engagement with *Moana*, specifically, and how the narrative of Moana leaving her island in pursuit of solutions to the issues her family faced was metaphorical of her parent/s’ transnational movements.

The final section of chapter three looked at the “leap” itself; a phrase that evolved from a discussion with Catherine of focus group A, who articulated that her bicultural identity got “in the way” of her engagement with mainstream cinema that featured white characters. Using *West Side Story* as an example of a narrative that featured both a white and Puerto Rican main character, Catherine felt that this binary was a major reason for her connection to the film. In representing what she referred to as a romantic narrative that centred around an “interracial” couple, Catherine was more invested in the story, and felt validated by the representation of their struggles and romantic connection. In this perceptive statement, Catherine was able to voice the drawbacks of being a bicultural audience member, consuming a large quantity of films that do not represent her experiences. In even discussing *West Side Story,* it can be assumed that the relevance of this narrative to Catherine is through her having one white parent and one Filipino parent, as well as being a woman of colour and having to encounter such issues when she develops her own romantic relationships in the future.

Through Catherine’s analysis of her own viewing processes, I compared these findings to the work of bell hooks in her interviews with black female spectators. The processes applied to meaning-making in the viewership of both groups, sees the relinquishing of particular aspects of their identities in order to achieve the immersive experience of cinematic pleasure. hooks articulates how her interviewees had to “…close down critique” (120), not querying the many discrepancies that surface from viewing mainstream cinema in order to gain enjoyment from film. I likened this to the

bicultural viewing experience, which both builds upon and complicates hooks' evaluation.

I argue that unlike the black female audience, for at least the portion of the group who have one European parent, the bicultural audience do have some affiliation to the white representation onscreen, even if it is through having a white parent. It is likely that while a bicultural spectator may have one white parent, the bicultural person themselves may be a person of colour. I acknowledge myself as one of these bicultural people. This feature of the bicultural identity creates confusion, guilt and, to an extent, anxiety around who one should affiliate with onscreen, what aspects should be critiqued, and who should be telling what stories.

Going forward in this new area of audience reception research in New Zealand, there are many avenues that can be developed as a result of this pilot project. I recommend further evaluation and developments drawing on the bicultural identity within a New Zealand context, particularly whether diversity is recognized in education, as this influences positive engagement with a bicultural person's secondary culture. There are many ways to celebrate minority groups within society and incorporate their values and customs within schools and communities. New Zealand has the wonderful opportunity to be at the forefront of such developments as a multicultural country. Education of other cultures should take priority over the euro-centric approach in areas like history, languages and the creative arts, in order to create a rich tapestry of communal belonging.

I do not contest that the history of New Zealand not take priority when developing a sense of identity in schools and as a country. However, a more introspective approach to education and in academia would allow for marginalised voices to be heard, and provide a platform for burgeoning perspectives. Using a qualitative approach to audience reception can also inform and influence creators of television content and cinematic texts. This knowledge has the potential to paint a clearer picture of who is telling the stories, who is consuming them and how they are being received. NZonAir has an entire page dedicated to a *Diversity Report* (June 2017) which features statistical analyses of television production. While these numbers provide a basic understanding of who is producing what, it does not capture the quality of output, the research that is put into these government-funded projects, and—most importantly—who is receiving these texts.

While it is important to illustrate who is in the film and television industry and the level of gender and cultural diversity behind the camera, what this report misses is that the quality of production is just as important as distribution and accessibility. This is particularly relevant to the multicultural audience whose stories they are telling, and who they are representing. Accessibility, providing more ways and better resources through which bicultural people can locate materials[58], is also an area that NZonAIR and the New Zealand Film Commission can work towards in order to convey narratives about contemporary, unique kiwis. They can be tools used to educate and inform. The participants had more to say about the film industry, and what could be worked on to create more texts that they could relate to:

> Moderator: What type of movies would you like to see more of?
> Danica: I do wish there was more films with like, young girls, with different cultural backgrounds in different places; you don't really find a lot of films like that. It all is, you know, white American girl[s], [in] high school you know?
> Moderator: yeah, so you have to make that jump to be like
> Danica: Yeah
> Moderator: "Aw she doesn't have to deal with all this stuff (cultural etiquette, bicultural identity living in NZ) that maybe I've [had to experience]
> Danica: Yeah
> Moderator: Not that that is bad (experiencing different culture), it's all wonderful stuff
> Danica: Yeah, It's just a lot different [things to think about]
> Moderator: So you want to see more people (women) of diverse backgrounds and more women or girls?
> Danica: Yep
> Emily: Seeing other people's backgrounds, like their cultural backgrounds. Like *Moana*, and like different Island [cultures] (recognising the diversity among Pacific Island cultures, rather than combining them into one onscreen)
> Fiona: I quite liked *Hidden Figures*, so maybe more stuff like that...targeting big themes, … and it's a true story like, just things like that
> Greta: Definitely seeing people with more diverse backgrounds and like, seeing that part of the world (the islands)

[58] Incorporating information about NZ content featuring new and burgeoning voices, and different approaches to storytelling, can be engaged through primary and secondary education, as well as spreading representation of minorities to more accurately represent the NZ population.

Though there may be a few texts that have been produced for bicultural people like those featured in this thesis, these discussions illustrate that stories of bicultural navigation and negotiation of space, knowledge, and identity have yet to be adequately realised on screen.

There are no lines, no parameters around what is and is not a bicultural viewing process, because there is no category for us as bicultural people. We are the embodied 'grey area' of society, of New Zealand, and as audience members. This greyness, this in-between-ness, that we embody in a New Zealand context is what is at the heart of this thesis, and what is for the first time being recognized as a relevant and important field of audience reception research. This thesis creates a space for recognition and celebration of the highly-sophisticated methods and processes of spectatorship that the bicultural audience practice. It is important that the bicultural audience be documented for their unique contributions to identity research and audience reception, as well as providing new and insightful contributions to the process of making meaning within a contemporary New Zealand context. Developing narratives and reception theories that recognize the multicultural nature of New Zealand, outside of stereotypes and racial limitations, would benefit bicultural audiences and majority voices alike.

Appendix A – Focus Sheet Information Sheet

Reference Number: 17/051
24/04/2017

The Bicultural Audience and Film
INFORMATION SHEET FOR
PARTICIPANTS or PARENTS / GUARDIANS ETC.

Thank you for showing an interest in this project. Please read this information sheet carefully before deciding whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate we thank you. If you decide not to take part there will be no disadvantage to you and we thank you for considering our request.

What is the Aim of the Project?

The aim of this study is to discuss with young bicultural people in NZ how they engage with films. This focus group begins with a discussion about the participant's first memories of movies they watched as children. From here, the discussion will move into the present, where the participants will discuss what aspects of film they enjoy the most, and what films they feel best represent their experiences as young bicultural people. The goal is to get the participants to describe their process of engaging with films as a text, and what they feel makes a great film, which they can relate to and enjoy.

What Type of Participants are being sought?

- Students chosen for this study have met the following criteria, which contains my research to group which I refer to as the "bicultural audience":

a) The participant has one or both parents who have immigrated to NZ prior to their birth; therefore making the bicultural person a NZ-born citizen.

b) The country that the parent/s have immigrated from is a non-western country. This means that the culture and national identity of the country that the parent/s have come from is distinct from that of western countries such as Australia or NZ. The binary of these two cultures is what these students must balance in their own identities, and informs the way they engage with the world, and the media.

c) The bicultural student has been raised in NZ.

- The number of participants involved in this study is approximately 15-25 students. Each of the three focus groups will have 4-8 participants. At the end of the focus group, each student will receive a $20 supermarket voucher as a token of gratitude for taking part in the study.

- The main benefit of being involved in this study is providing a contribution to new research that is looking at the way the bicultural audience engages with films. This study provides a foundation for a new field of audience reception research in NZ, that academically acknowledges the growing bicultural audience.

What will Participants be Asked to Do?

Should you agree to take part in this project, you will be asked to:

- Meet at a classroom within the school, where the project researcher will have set up for the focus group. Participants will have afternoon tea, before they will be given information about what will be covered in the focus group. The researcher will begin with a sequence of questions about films, and film-watching habits. The researcher will give a summary of how the information participants have given will contribute to the study, and allow time for any questions.

- Each focus group will take place one weekday after school, from approximately 3:10pm – 5:15pm.

- There will be clear guidelines set out at the beginning of the session to ensure a safe, welcoming environment where each student feels comfortable to express their opinions in a mindful manner, and to treat myself and each other with respect and compassion.

- The focus groups will take place after school finished at approximately 3pm, and will not finish until 5:15pm. It is important that alternative transport arrangements be arranged in advance by parents/caregiver for participants.

Please be aware that you may decide not to take part in the project without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

What Data or Information will be Collected and What Use will be Made of it?

- Participants will be audio recorded for the duration of the session so accurate descriptions of answers to questions can be obtained.
- The audio recorder will be in plain sight for the entire session, and will be acknowledged in the introduction, along with the chance for students to ask any questions or voice any concerns they may have regarding the use of the audio recorder.
- The only personal information that will be recorded will be name, age, school that they attend and ethnicity/cultural background.
- Once the focus groups have been completed and the data has been analysed, the information will be used in the final write up of the Researcher, Amie Taua's Masters thesis. The insight that the students provide in the focus groups will help formulate a bicultural audience reception theory.
- The only people who will have access to the information gathered from the focus groups will be Amie Taua (student researcher), Davinia Thornley (Supervisor),

Catherine Fowler (Head of MFCO Department), and Gabrielle Mulder (Research Assistant).

- All information obtained in the focus groups for this study will be securely stored on an encoded USB stick, and all paper work containing focus group notes/personal information will be securely locked in the office of co-investigator Amie Taua. The data collected will be securely stored at all times. Data obtained as a result of the research will be retained for **at least 5 years** in secure storage. Any personal information held on the participants [namely audio recording, consent forms, focus group work sheets] may be destroyed at the completion of the research even though the data derived from the research will, in most cases, be kept for much longer or possibly indefinitely.
- The only personal information that is collected from the focus groups will be age, gender and ethnicity. The identity of ALL participants will be kept anonymous in the write up of the Masters thesis completed by Amie Taua. Only the answers provided by participants in the focus group may be reflected in the completed research.
- It is the top priority of the student researcher and those involved to maintain confidentiality for all participants involved. The results of the project may be published and will be available in the University of Otago Library (Dunedin, NZ) but every attempt will be made to preserve your anonymity and that of your child.

This project involves an open-questioning technique. The general line of questioning includes early childhood memories of movie-watching, current movie-watching habits, and experiences of bicultural representation in movies/movie characters. The precise nature of the questions which will be asked have not been determined in advance, but will depend on the way in which the focus group develops. Consequently, although the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee is aware of the general areas to be explored in the interview, the Committee has not been able to review the precise questions to be used.

In the event that the line of questioning does develop in such a way that you feel hesitant or uncomfortable you are reminded of your right to decline to answer any particular question(s) and also that you may withdraw from the project at any stage without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

Can Participants Change their Mind and Withdraw from the Project?

You may withdraw from participation in the project at any time up to one week before your focus group commences without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind. If you would like to withdraw after that date, please contact Amie so can make arrangements for additional participants.

What if Participants have any Questions?

If you have any questions about our project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact either:

Amie Taua and Davinia Thornley
Department of Media, Film and Communications
Department of Media, Film and

Communications
University Telephone Number:
479-3724
Email Address:
Tauam174@student.otago.ac.nz

University Telephone Number:
479-4182
Email Address:
davinia.thornley@otago.ac.nz

This study has been approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (ph +643 479 8256 or email gary.witte@otago.ac.nz). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.

Appendix B – Parental and Participant Forms

The Bicultural Audience and Film

CONSENT FORM FOR
PARENTS/GUARDIANS

I have read the Information Sheet concerning this project and understand what it is about. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I am free to request further information at any stage.
I know that:-

1. My child's participation in the project is entirely voluntary;

2. I am free to withdraw my child from the project at any time up until one week before the focus group is to take place, without any disadvantage. If you would like to withdraw your child after that date, please contact Amie so can make arrangements for additional participants;

3. Personal identifying information [audio recordings and work sheets] may be destroyed at the conclusion of the project but any raw data on which the results of the project depend will be retained in secure storage for at least five years;

4. This project involves an open-questioning technique. The general line of questioning includes early childhood memories of movie-watching, current movie-watching habits, and experiences of bicultural representation in movies/movie characters. The precise nature of the questions which will be asked have not been determined in advance, but will depend on the way in which the interview develops and that in the event that the line of questioning develops in such a way that my child feels hesitant or uncomfortable he/she may decline to answer any particular question(s) and/or may withdraw from the project without any disadvantage of any kind.

5. At the conclusion of each focus group, in addition to being provided with afternoon tea, each participant will also receive a $20 supermarket voucher.

6. The results of the project may be published and will be available in the University of Otago Library (Dunedin, NZ) but every attempt will be made to preserve my child's anonymity.

I agree for my child to take part in this project.

.....

.....
(Signature of parent/guardian)
(Date)

.....
(Name of child)

……..
Name of person taking consent

This study has been approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (ph +643 479 8256 or email gary.witte@otago.ac.nz). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.

Bicultural Audience and Film
CONSENT FORM FOR CHILD PARTICIPANTS

I have been told about this study and understand what it is about. All my questions have been answered in a way that makes sense.
I know that:

1. Participation in this study is voluntary, which means that I do not have to take part if I don't want to and nothing will happen to me. I can also stop taking part at any time and don't have to give a reason.

2. Anytime I want to stop, that's okay.

3. Amie will audio record me so that she can remember what I say, but the recording will be erased after the study has ended.

4. If I don't want to answer some of the questions, that's fine.

5. If I have any worries or if I have any other questions, then I can talk about these with Amie or Gabrielle.

6. The paper and computer file with my answers will only be seen by Amie and the people she is working with. They will keep whatever I say private.

7. I will receive a small gift as thanks for helping with this study.

8. Amie will write up the results from this study for her University work. The results may also be written up in journals and talked about at conferences. My name will not be on anything Amie writes up about this study.

I agree to take part in the study.

....
Signed Date

Appendix C – Focus Group Participant Information

This appendix provides transcripts from focus group A and B. Focus group A were from all-female, from a single-sex Dunedin High School, while focus group B were a mixed group of female and male students from a Dunedin Catholic High School. It should be noted that transcripts have minor alterations for clarity, but for the most part, are direct quotes from participants. Originally, each focus group was to be made up of 4-8 participants. However, due to the unreliability of returned permission slips, the staff member who I worked with participants for focus group B sent out several more permission slips. This resulted in a slightly larger group than I had initially intended. Of course, this impacted the dynamic and contributions of focus group B, but I made the decision to include all participants who returned their permission slips and showed up to the session, to be inclusive and also respect that had been put in by the staff member I worked with.

Pseudonyms have been given to each of the participants to protect their identities. Their gender, year group at High School and ethnicity were noted when participants joined the focus group and each filled in a sign-in sheet, which adheres to the recommendations of the Ngāi Tahu Research Consultation Committee, but does not directly enter the question outline I followed. This meant that I was able to record participants' ethnic backgrounds without priming them with questions about their ethnicity, which they could then use to contextualise their responses.

Below is the table of focus group A and B, which include their pseudonyms, year group, gender and ethnicity. This information was provided by participants themselves, which allows for autonomy in how they identify themselves within the bicultural audience.

FOCUS GROUP A FEMALE: MAY 26 2017

Name	Year Group	Gender	Ethnicity
Anna	Year 9	F	Samoan
Bella	Year 9	F	Israeli/Māori
Catherine	Year 12	F	Filipino /NZ European
Danica	Year 11	F	Lebanese
Emily	Year 11	F	Tongan
Fiona	Year 12	F	Peruvian
Greta	Year 12	F	Cook Island

FOCUS GROUP B: MIXED JUN 01 2017

Name	Year Group	Gender	Ethnicity
Hannah	Year 9	F	Chinese (adopted)
Ingrid	Year 9	F	Cook Island/European
Jane	Year 9	F	Fijian/European
Kelsey	Year 11	F	Samoan
Lilly	Year 11	F	Fijian/European
Mason	Year 11	M	Samoan/NZ European
Nigel	Year 12	M	Samoan/NZ European
Oscar	Year 13	M	Tokelauan/European
Peter	Year 7	M	Cambodian/European
Renee	Year 12	F	Tongan (Full)
Stephen	Year 12	M	Samoan (Full)

Appendix D – Focus Group Question Outline

Introduction:

My name is Amie Taua, I am a Masters student in the Media, Film and Communications department at the University of Otago. For my Masters, I am looking at the movie viewing habits of young bicultural people in NZ. Today we're just going to chat about movies, about how movies play a role in your lives, what you use them for, whether it be to educate yourselves, or purely for entertainment purposes. Just to get the general housekeeping out of the way, I will be recording this session, but only myself and one other person working on my study will listen to the recording of this session. All of your identities will remain confidential, as will any information you provide regarding your families and friends. If you have any questions at all about what we cover here today, please let me know and I will answer to the best of my ability. In this space, we will be respectful of each other, and each other's ideas and opinions. If at any point, for whatever reason you feel uncomfortable, please let me know, so we can work together to fix the situation. When someone is speaking, please try not to talk over them. Wait until that person is finished, or if you can't, indicate with a hand up, and you will have the next turn to speak. Because this is a study that looks at watching movies and movie choices, there are no wrong answers. If your response is an honest one, regardless of how irrelevant you think it might, please feel welcome to share it. All of your ideas and opinions are important and relevant. Hopefully you guys will enjoy yourselves, and also learn about your fellow classmates.

Section A: Ice Breaker (15-20min)

Alright, to begin with, I want you guys to shout out NZ films that you guys have seen and like. (Brain storm) Now let's put them into order of 1-10 of best to not the best.

I want you guys to get into pairs, and talk about the first film you remember seeing as a child

I will give you 10 minutes to go through the questions with your partner.

When they answer your question, please write their answer in the empty boxes

When we have a few minutes left, I'll let you know. Then we will come back together as a group and you can introduce your partner to the group, and tell us about their first movie.

Ask the following questions and then report back to the group: (Cover Section B: First Films watched by students in I/B exercise)

What is the first movie you remember seeing as a child?	
Do you remember who you watched the movie with?	
Who chose to watch that movie?	
What was your favourite part about that movie?	
What do you enjoy most about watching movies?	

I will get involved with my co-moderator, will start the group conversation

Make sure to ask students if they have seen the film discussed

Get the students to present back to the group what they have found out about their partner

Get students to hand in the forms they have filled out

<u>Section A continued:</u>

I will list the films on the board: brain storm "First Movies We Watched" (will add mine and the moderators)

<u>Section B: Film Viewing Habits (Family/Friends/Alone)</u>

Who would be in charge of putting the movie on/choosing the movie?

Who did you watch movies most often with?

Did you re-watch films as a child?

Do you still re-watch films?
What films do you re-watch?
Who with?
What types of films do you watch with your friends? (Genre, Favourite actor/actress, type of cinema – NZ, Korean, American)
What kinds of movies do your parents like to watch?
What movies do you watch together with your family?
Do you ever watch movies by yourself? What kind of movies do you like watching by yourself?
(Give summary of answers to above Questions): Do you think summarises our discussion?

<u>Section C: Bicultural Audience/History Questions</u>

What do you look out for when you are choosing a movie? (a Hollywood star/particular narrative/visual effects)

Describe what makes a movie great, or good for re-watching

What movies have you watched do you feel you relate to?

What about the movie did you relate to? (The character? The story? The developments/changes over the course of the movie?) How did you make that connection?

What movies or type of movie best represents your experiences? (genre, characters, narratives) This question can apply in a number of ways. If you think a character in a movie is similar to you in personality, that means you think you have been represented.

What type of movies would you like to see more of?

What characters and movies do you most identify with?

Describe the most important thing that you can take away from a movie

(Short overview before final question)

So here today, you have all contributed to a study that looks at how young people who are born in NZ, but who have a bicultural background (that is, having either one of both parents who have relocated to NZ from their country of origin) watch and engage with movies. This means that you all have a unique history that influences your identity as a New Zealanders, and informs your perspective. This perspective is what makes you part of the bicultural audience, whose experiences and identities are not represented in movies because they are so new. This means all of you like movies that may not represent your identity or experiences, but you go through a process when watching a movie, that finds aspects of the narrative or character (for example) that you can relate to, so you can enjoy it. These viewing process are not uncommon; everyone goes through a process when watching a movie in order to enjoy and appreciate it. It is just that your viewing processes, and the viewing processes of the wider bicultural audience within NZ, has not yet been specifically recognized. That is why this study is important. Today I asked you all questions that will help film makers and people at the University like me, who study movies and movie audiences, understand how your bicultural identity informs your movie choices and preferences.

(Final Question): Is there anything that we should have talked about in terms of your film watching habits that you think I have missed? (Allow for 10minutes for this question to discuss anything students think has been missed out)

Is there any advice you would like to give that might help improve the next focus group that I run?

Thank you so much for your time and contribution! Feel free to ask any questions.

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